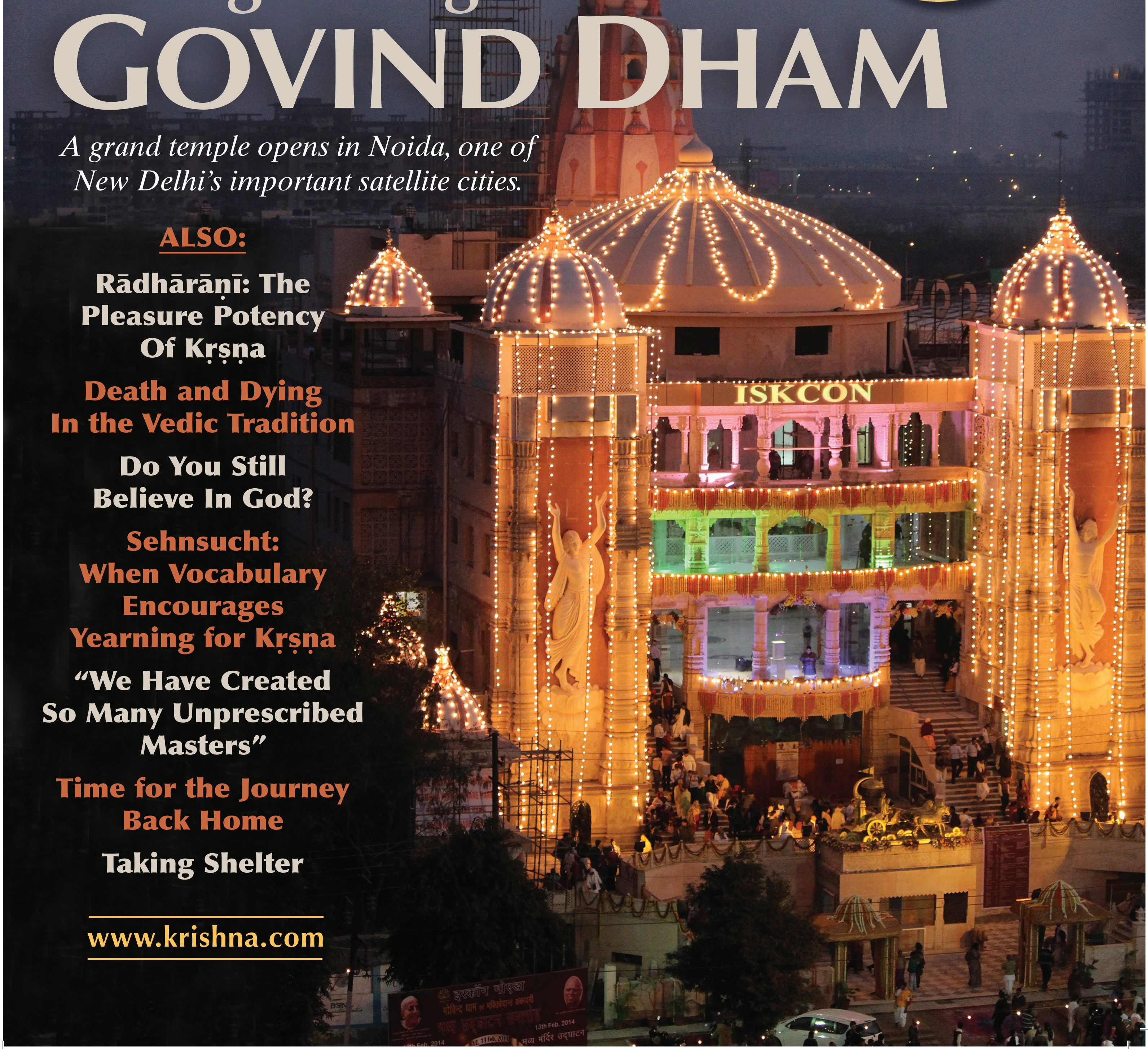
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Sep/Oct 2014 • $4.50



Inaugurating GOVIND DHAM

A grand temple opens in Noida, one of New Delhi's important satellite cities.

ALSO:

Rādhārāṇī: The Pleasure Potency Of Kṛṣṇa

Death and Dying In the Vedic Tradition

Do You Still Believe In God?

Sehnsucht: When Vocabulary Encourages Yearning for Kṛṣṇa

"We Have Created So Many Unprescribed Masters"

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Taking Shelter

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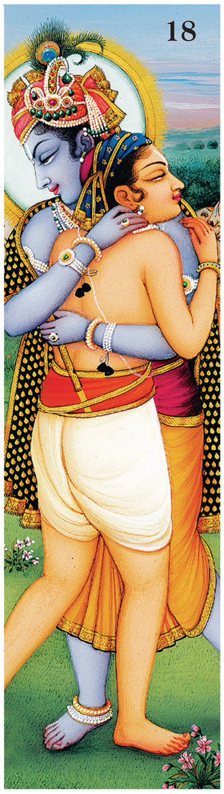

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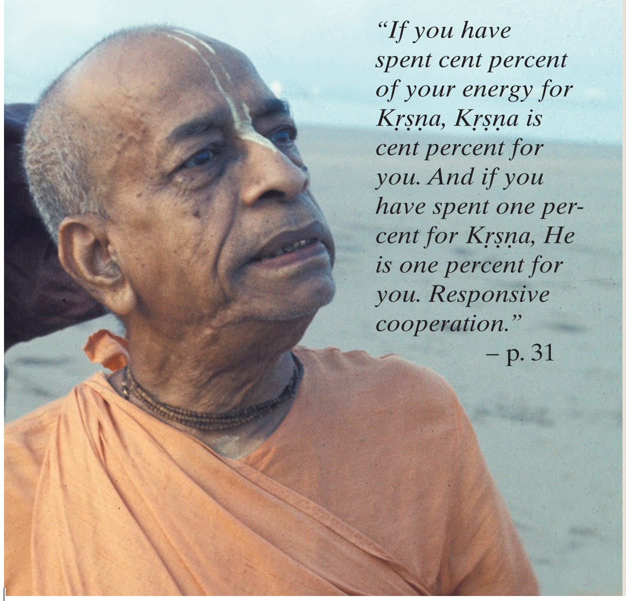
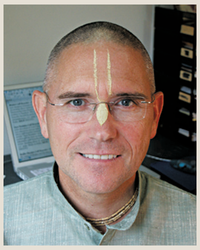
COVER A new temple of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) opened last February in Noida, a planned "integrated industrial township" outside New Delhi. Please see the article on the temple and the inauguration ceremonies beginning on page 34. (Photo by Atul Agrawal.)



"If you have spent cent percent of your energy for Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is cent percent for you. And if you have spent one percent for Kṛṣṇa, He is one percent for you. Responsive cooperation."
– p. 31

WELCOME



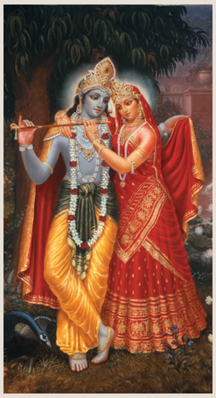
Readers outside India may never have heard of Noida, where an impressive ISKCON temple opened in February. It's a planned township across the Yamuna River from New Delhi. Started in the 1970s, it has grown steadily, and since 1998 ISKCON's presence has grown along with it. By focusing on spiritual education, Govind Dham, as the temple is known, is sure to benefit many people in the greater Delhi area.

Skeptics sometimes challenged Śrīla Prabhupāda on whether ISKCON was helping people in any practical way. He would often reply that ISKCON's contribution was education – giving people the highest spiritual knowledge, to their eternal benefit. An example of the refined spiritual information that ISKCON, in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, presents to the world appears in Satyarāja Dāsa's article in this issue, "Sehnsucht: When Vocabulary Encourages Yearning for Kṛṣṇa." Another example of the practical value of ISKCON's message appears in "Death and Dying in the Vedic Tradition," an excerpt from a new book by Girirāja Swami. What could be more relevant than learning how to face one's death? "Finding Shelter," by Navīna Śyāma Dāsa, also gives practical knowledge. Faced with the unrelenting challenges of life, where can we turn for sure relief?

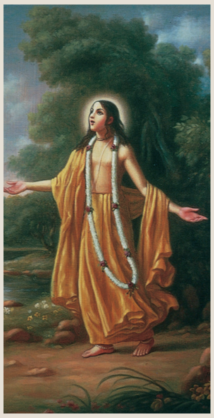
Hare Kṛṣṇa. – *Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BACK TO
GODHEAD
The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

FOUNDER (under the direction of His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda** (1896–1977)

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INDIA: **PUBLISHER** Yudhiṣṭhira Dāsa • **PRODUCTION** Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa, Sundara Rūpa Dāsa • **GENERAL MANAGER & CIRCULATION** Pāṇḍurāṅga Dāsa • **ACCOUNTS** Sahadeva Dāsa • **SUBSCRIBER SERVICES** Mañjarī Devī Dāsī

EDITORIAL OFFICES Send editorial correspondence to BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Phone: (386) 462-7794. Email: editors@krishna.com. Or BTG, 3rd Floor, 302, Amrut Industrial Estate, Western Express Hwy., Mira Rd. (E), Mumbai 401104, India. Phone: (022) 32556701. Email: btgindia@pamho.net

SUBSCRIPTIONS *Back to Godhead* is published six times a year. For a one-year subscription (US and Canada) send $19.95 to BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Or call toll-free: 1-800-800-3284. For subscriptions outside the US and Canada add $10. Payment in US funds (payable on a US bank) must accompany your order. In the UK send £18.99 to BTG UK Ltd., Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts. WD25 8EZ. In South Africa send R240 to Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 56003, Chatsworth 4030.

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PREPRESS & PRINTING Magna Graphics (I) Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai.

© 2014 The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International. All rights reserved. (Trustee for The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust: Svavāsa Dāsa.) *Back to Godhead* (ISSN 0005-3643, USPS 604-170) is published bimonthly (six times a year) for $19.95 per year by Back To Godhead, 18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615. Periodicals postage paid at Alachua, Florida, and additional mailing offices. CANADA POST AGREEMENT #: 40612608. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616. Canada Returns to be sent to Pitney Bowes, P. O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2

Letters

Raising Devotee Children Among Meat-Eaters

How can I raise my children (ages six and ten) in Kṛṣṇa consciousness when we are surrounded by close family who are nondevotees. It is a constant challenge for me. I teach my children about Kṛṣṇa consciousness at home and take them to the temple so that they can associate with other devotee children.

My other family members are meat-eaters. Associating with close family who eat meat can be very confusing for my children, as they will sometimes want to copy other children and adults in the family. It's very difficult because we can't just stop associating with close family who live nearby.

Saroj
Via the Internet

Our reply (written by Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciple Lakṣmīmaṇī Devī Dāsī, one of Krishna.com's Live Help volunteers): Your problem is certainly a common one, especially in today's society. Often children find themselves at odds not only with family, but also with classmates and even teachers. Although vegetarianism is becoming more popular, it is still not the norm, and thus vegetarian children can be challenged and even taunted. Your task is to give them confidence and ammunition to answer questions and understand differences and still remain strong.

Your children are at good ages for you to begin giving them the training they will need to live as devotees and vegetarians in a nondevotee family and society. The training needs to come on several levels.

First they need to feel good about what they are doing. Your telling them that Kṛṣṇa said that meat-eating is bad won't necessarily make them feel good about what they are doing, especially the ten-year-old. The children should develop a love for life – whether human, animal, or plant.

Often overlooked in our training of children is the need to impart the understanding of the deep connection between animals and life. They should know what happens at death, and what killing animals – or any life form – means. The consequences of loss, killing, hurting, and death are often neglected in movies, cartoons, video games, and our own training of children. Death and dying are not comfortable topics, but their lessons are profound. In movies and games, people and animals "die" and return to life, and one never sees the lamentation of the parents or siblings. The ramifications of death are hidden.

Help your children love life and understand the deep relationship between animals and the animals' children, and between animals and human beings. Let them know animals and see them up close.

And let them experience the pain and sadness of death. They can do that through quality books and videos of animal stories – movies about animals and children, for example. This will help them to get a real picture. And then help them make the connection between what people are eating and the animals the children respect and have affection for. Help them understand that meat-eating means that an innocent animal has lost a family member.

They can also learn about health reasons for vegetarianism, and other arguments as well. There are many sources of this information that can be very helpful. This type of training and learning will give them strength and conviction to defend themselves against those who taunt or challenge them. It will help them feel satisfied with their diet. They may even feel sorry when they see family members doing things contrary to their own conviction.

On another level, they must learn to be respectful and tolerant, especially with family. Unless asked they should not challenge anyone (although as the ten-year-old becomes a teenager, that ban might slacken a bit). That said, they should be prepared to speak their mind if asked or challenged. They can learn to speak to people willing to hear about why they are vegetarians. If they are educated and well spoken, you will see that they can have a very powerful effect on others.

So far, I have spoken only from the material side of things, and certainly there is more to our vegetarianism than just the material point of view. But it is essential that young children have a strong personal conviction about what they are doing. If what they convey to others seems to be well thought out and makes sense materially, it will have more impact and greater success than spiritual arguments written off as "brainwashing" and met with pity for the child.

For the children to have success in standing up for themselves, they must be able to defend their spiritual beliefs with rational and even passionate conviction. They must be strong and not attracted to degraded habits.

They should see the connection between their strong convictions and such things as reincarnation, nonviolence toward animals, the sanctity of the soul, protection of the environment, and God's compassion. Then they will have a dynamic, powerful defense that will strengthen their own beliefs and change the hearts of others.

Impressive Article on the Gītā

Regarding Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa's article "Why Is the Bhagavad-gītā So Pessimistic?" (March/April 2014), I agree that the accusation that religious folk are morbid and life-negating is all too common, so I'm glad he challenged it. And probably because he has meditated on this topic for many years (as he says in the article), the result was impressive.

I have heard before the example of how our little finger can hardly give us any pleasure but, if injured, can give so much pain, but his DIVE exposition so thoroughly expanded on this point, it left no doubt that this body is a vehicle for suffering.

I also thought his analogy on religious practice being like chemotherapy was excellent. Through it, he acknowledged that *sādhana* [daily spiritual practice] can be trying at first, but also showed how it still makes sense to take it up, given the alternative.

Finally, I appreciated his directly attacking mainstream consensus reality, boldly pointing out its flaws. (The observation about boredom was especially poignant. I have often said that, the threefold miseries aside, the real problem in the material world is that it's so boring!)

I thank him for continuing to write. I hope he can inspire others to follow in his footsteps.

Navīna Śyāma Dāsa
Dallas, Texas

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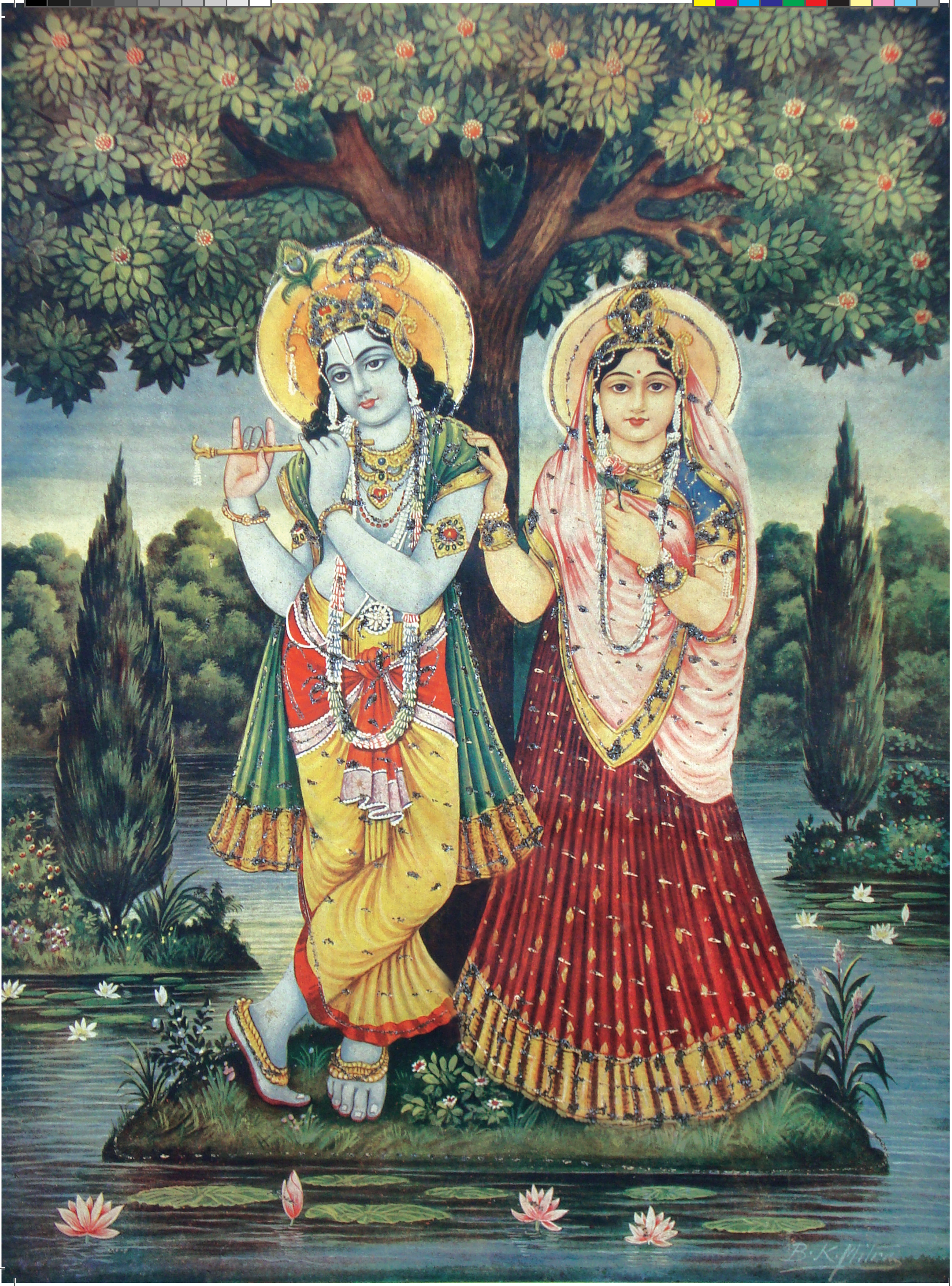

B. K. Mitra

FOUNDER'S LECTURE

London (on Rādhāṣṭamī) – August 29, 1971

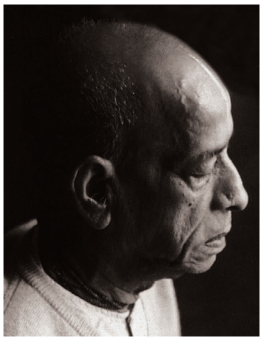
Rādhārāṇī

The Pleasure Potency of Kṛṣṇa

The best way to please Kṛṣṇa is to please His greatest devotee.

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



THIS evening we are talking about Rādhāṣṭamī, the appearance day of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. We are trying to understand the chief potency of Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī is the pleasure potency of Kṛṣṇa. As we understand from Vedic literature, Kṛṣṇa has many varieties of potency. As a big man has many assistants and secretaries and hasn't got to do anything personally because simply by his will everything is done, similarly the Supreme Personality of Godhead has got varieties of energy, and everything is being done so nicely.

The Sanskrit name for the material energy is *bahir-aṅga-śakti,* or the "external energy" of Kṛṣṇa. How nicely everything is being done by the material energy. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10), *mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram:* "Under My superintendence the material energy is working." The material energy is not blind. Kṛṣṇa is there in the background. *Prakṛti* means the material energy, the external energy.

There is another energy, the internal energy, by which the spiritual world is being manifested. *Paras tasmāt tu bhāvaḥ anyaḥ* (*Gītā* 8.20). It is *parā:* superior, transcendental, the spiritual world. As this material world is being manipulated under the external energy, the spiritual world is conducted by the internal potency. That internal potency is Rādhārāṇī.

Today is Rādhārāṇī's appearance day. We should try to understand Rādhārāṇī. She is the pleasure potency, *hlādinī-śakti. Ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt.* In the *Vedānta-sūtras* (1.1.12) the Absolute Truth is described as *ānandamaya,* always in the pleasure potency. When you want *ānanda,* pleasure, you cannot have it alone. You cannot enjoy alone. When you are in the circle of friends or family or other associates, you feel pleasure. I am speaking, and the speaking is very pleasing for me when there are many persons here. I cannot speak alone here. That is not *ānanda.* I can speak here in the dead of night when nobody is here, but that is not *ānanda.* For *ānanda* there must be others. So because Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, is *ānandamaya,* He has become many: *eko bahu syām.* We are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa and are meant to give pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. The chief pleasure potency is Rādhārāṇī.

Kṛṣṇa is Param Brahman, as you know from the *Bhagavad-gītā.* When Arjuna understood the *Bhagavad-gītā,* he affirmed Kṛṣṇa as Param Brahman (*Gītā* 10.12). In the material world we see that a great saintly person gives up all material enjoyment simply to enjoy *brahmānanda,* the bliss of spiritual existence. He becomes a *sannyāsī,* renouncing the world to gain Brahman realization. So if one has to give up everything material for Brahman realization, do you think that Param Brahman, the Supreme Brahman, can enjoy anything material? No. Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment is nothing material. This point should be understood. For Brahman realization we are giving up everything material. So how can Param Brahman enjoy anything material? This question has been very much nicely discussed by Jīva Gosvāmī in his *Bhāgavata-sandarbha.*

Kṛṣṇa means "all-attractive." Rādhārāṇī is so great that She attracts Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is all-attractive, but She is the attractor of Kṛṣṇa.

Information about Param Brahman is not there in this material world. A little Brahman information is there, a little Paramātmā information is there, but not Param Brahman, or Bhagavān, information. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says,

manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu
kaścid yatati siddhaye
yatatām api siddhānāṁ
kaścin māṁ vetti tattvataḥ

"Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth." (*Gītā* 7.3) *Siddhaye* means to understand Brahman or Paramātmā, the Supersoul. Out of many persons who have realized Brahman and Paramātmā, hardly one person can know Kṛṣṇa. What can we understand about Kṛṣṇa's pleasure potency? Without knowing a big man, how can I understand his internal affairs? Similarly, if we do not understand Kṛṣṇa, how can we understand how Kṛṣṇa is enjoying? That is not possible. But the six Gosvāmīs, Caitanya Mahāprabhu's leading disciples, have given us information about Kṛṣṇa's pleasure potency, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

We have given information about the loving affairs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in our book *Teachings of Lord Caitanya.* If you have got this book, you can read about the transcendental loving reciprocation between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Pray to Rādhārāṇī

We pray to Rādhārāṇī because She is the pleasure potency of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa means "all-attractive." But Rādhārāṇī is so great that She attracts Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is all-attractive, but She is the attractor of Kṛṣṇa. So today we should try to understand the position of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and offer our obeisances to Rādhārāṇī.

tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgi
rādhe vṛndāvaneśvarī
vṛṣabhānu-sute devī
praṇamāmi hari-priye

"I offer my respects to Rādhārāṇī, whose bodily complexion is like molten gold and who is the Queen of Vṛndāvana. You are the daughter of King Vṛṣabhānu, and You are very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa." Our business is to pray, "Rādhārāṇī, You are so dear to Kṛṣṇa. So we offer our respectful obeisances unto You."

Rādhārāṇī is *hari-priyā,* "very dear to Kṛṣṇa." Approaching Kṛṣṇa becomes very easy when done through Rādhārāṇī, through the mercy of Rādhārāṇī. If Rādhārāṇī recommends, "This devotee is very nice," then Kṛṣṇa immediately accepts us, however great a fool we may be. Because we have been recommended by Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa accepts us. Therefore in Vrindavan today you'll find all the devotees chanting Rādhārāṇī's name more than Kṛṣṇa's. Wherever you go you'll find the devotees are addressing one another with "*Jaya Rādhe!*" You'll still find this in Vrindavan. They are glorifying Rādhārāṇī. They are more interested in worshiping Rādhārāṇī than in worshiping Kṛṣṇa, because however fallen I may be, if some way or other I can please Rādhārāṇī, then it will be very easy for me to understand Kṛṣṇa.

Otherwise, if you try to understand Kṛṣṇa by the speculative process, it will take many, many lives. But if you take to devotional service and just try to please Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa will be gotten very easily, because Rādhārāṇī can deliver Kṛṣṇa. She is such a great devotee – the emblem of the *mahā-bhāgavata,* the greatest devotee.

Even Kṛṣṇa cannot understand

Rādhārāṇī's qualities. Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.26), *vedāhaṁ samatītāni* – "I know everything" – but He fails to understand Rādhārāṇī. Rādhārāṇī is so great.

Kṛṣṇa As Caitanya Mahāprabhu

To understand Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa came as Caitanya Mahāprabhu to accept the position of Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa wanted to understand the potency of Rādhārāṇī. He thought, "I am full. I am complete in every respect, but still I want to understand Rādhārāṇī. Why?" This desire obliged Kṛṣṇa to accept the propensities of Rādhārāṇī.

This is a very great transcendental science. Only one who is advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and well conversant with the *śāstras*, the Vedic scriptures, can understand. But still, we can discuss from the *śāstras.* When Kṛṣṇa wanted to understand Himself, He took the tendencies of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and that is Caitanya Mahāprabhu. *Rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitam:* Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa, but He has accepted the propensities of Rādhārāṇī. As Rādhārāṇī is always in feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa, similarly, in the position of Rādhārāṇī, Lord Caitanya was feeling separation from Kṛṣṇa. The process of devotional service taught by Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His disciplic succession is how to feel separation from Kṛṣṇa. That is Rādhārāṇī's position – always feeling the separation.

The six Gosvāmīs, also, when they were in Vrindavan, never said, "I have seen Kṛṣṇa." Although they were the most perfect devotees, they never said, "I have seen Kṛṣṇa." Their prayers were like this: *he rādhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-sūno kutaḥ.* "O Queen of Vṛndāvana, Rādhārāṇī! O Lalitā! O son of Nanda Mahārāja! Where are you all now?" Rādhārāṇī does not remain alone. She remains always with Her friends Lalitā, Viśākhā, and other damsels of Vrindavan. The Gosvāmīs, in their mature stage, when they were living in Vrindavan, were praying in this way. "Rādhārāṇī, where are You? Where are Your associates? Where are You, son of Nanda Mahārāja, Kṛṣṇa? Where are all of you?"

They were always searching. They never said, "Last night I saw Kṛṣṇa dancing with the *gopīs.*" A *sahajiyā* will speak like that, not a mature devotee. One who considers Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's pastimes to be something very cheap is called a *sahajiyā.* Kṛṣṇa very cheap, Rādhārāṇī very cheap – as if they can see Them every night. No. The Gosvāmīs do not teach us like that. They were searching after Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa. *Śrī-govardhana-kalpa-pādapa-tale kālindī-vane kutaḥ:* "Are You at Govardhana Hill? Are You on the bank of the Yamunā?" Their business was crying like this. "Where are You, Rādhārāṇī? Where are You? Where are you, Lalitā, Viśākhā, the associates of Rādhārāṇī? Where are You, Kṛṣṇa? Are You near Govardhana Hill? On the bank of the Yamunā?" Throughout the whole tract of Vrindavan they were crying and searching after them. *Khedair mahā-vihvalau:* as if madmen. This was the devotional example of the six Gosvāmīs: Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Process of Worship

We have to follow the footprints of the Gosvāmīs to learn how to search out Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī in Vrindavan or within our hearts. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's process of worship: feeling separation, or *vipralambha-sevā.* Caitanya Mahāprabhu felt such separation from Kṛṣṇa that in the dead of night He left His room, and nobody knew where He had gone. He was searching for Kṛṣṇa, and He fell into the sea.

This is the process of devotional

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in evade, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

service taught by Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is not that one thinks, "I have seen Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī in the *rāsa-līlā.*" No, not like that. Feel the separation. The more you feel separation from Kṛṣṇa, the more you are advancing. Don't try to see Kṛṣṇa artificially. Be advanced in feelings of separation, and then your devotional service will be perfect. That is the teaching of Lord Caitanya.

With our material eyes we cannot see Kṛṣṇa.

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
   na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
   svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ

"No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality, and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality, and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him." (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.234) With our material senses we cannot see or hear Kṛṣṇa, but we can realize Him through service to Him. Where does the service begin? *Jihvādau:* with the tongue, not the legs, eyes, ears. It begins with the tongue. How? Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. And take Kṛṣṇa *prasāda*. The tongue has got two businesses: to articulate sound and to taste. So chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and take *prasāda.* By this process you'll realize Kṛṣṇa.

Don't try to see Kṛṣṇa. You cannot see Kṛṣṇa with your material eyes. Nor can you hear Him with your material ears. Nor can you touch Him. But if you engage your tongue in the service of the Lord, then He'll reveal Himself to you: "Here I am." That is wanted.

So feel separation from Kṛṣṇa just like Rādhārāṇī, as Lord Caitanya teaches us, and engage your tongue in the service of the Lord. Then one day, when you are mature, you'll see Kṛṣṇa eye to eye.

Thank you very much. ❁

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Glossary

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Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as *Gītā*.)

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasāda—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion.

Purāṇas—Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śāstra—scriptures, especially the Vedic scriptures of India.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. (Cited as *Bhāg.*)

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

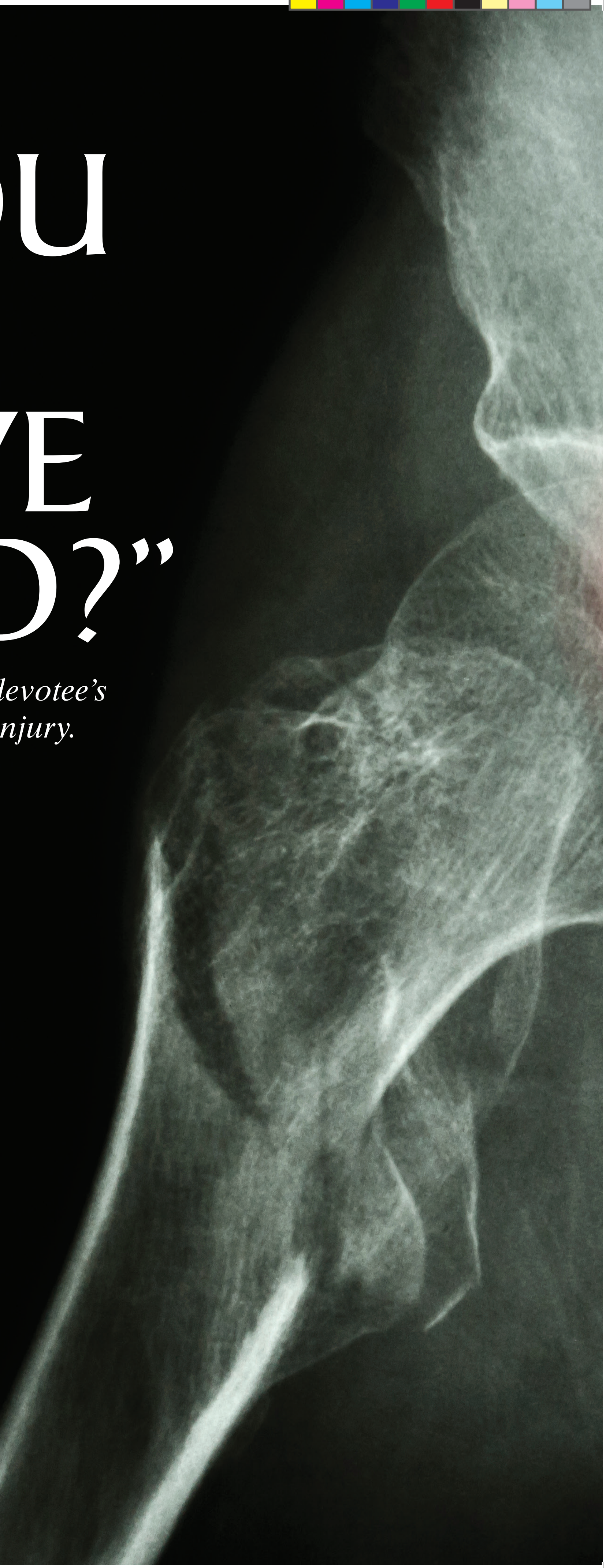
Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

“DO YOU STILL BELIEVE IN GOD?”

A skeptical friend challenges a devotee’s faith after the devotee’s painful injury.

by Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa



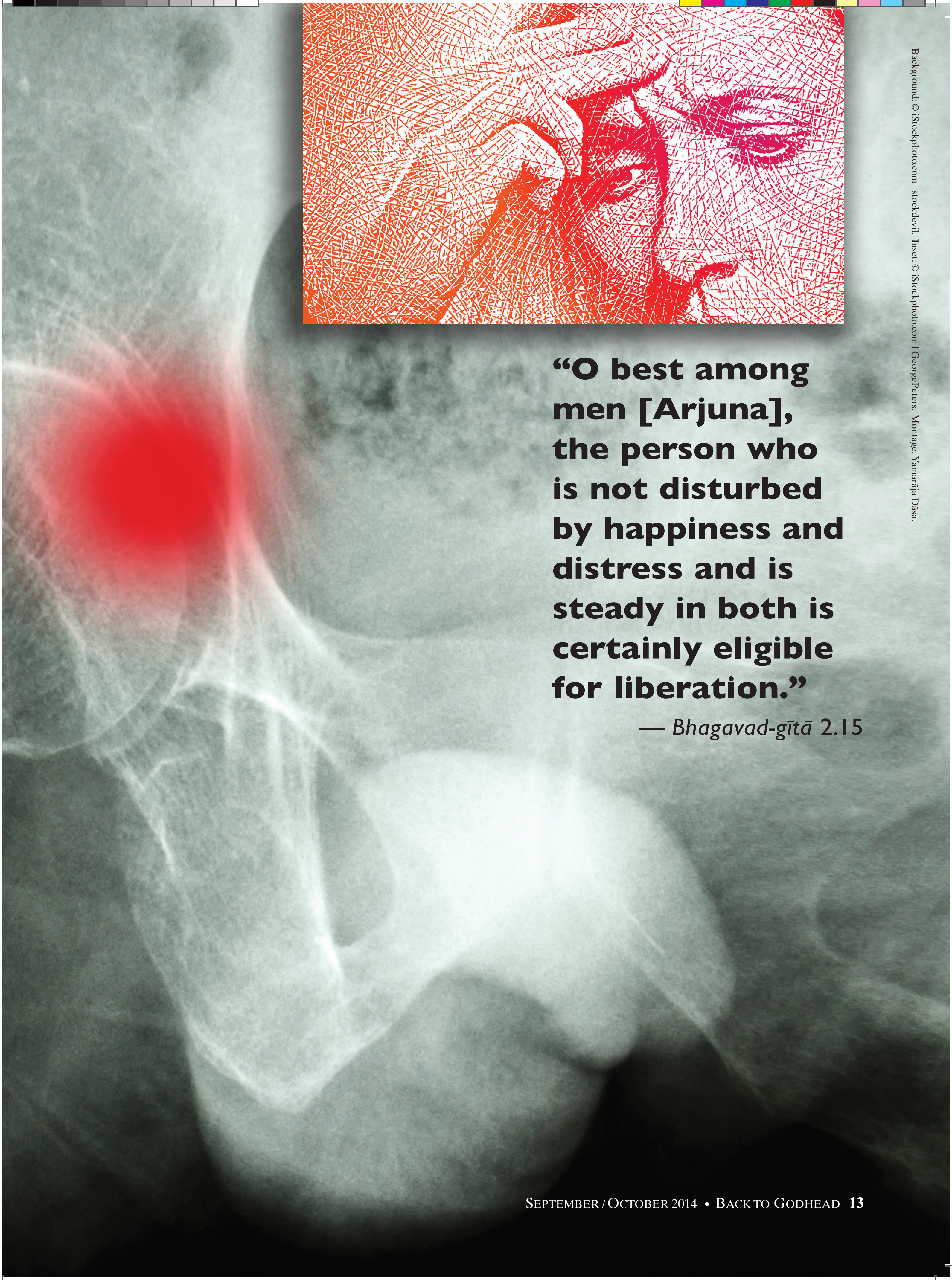
I RECENTLY CAME across a Gallup poll, conducted in 2011, in which Americans were asked, “Do you still believe in God?” Ninety percent answered yes.

The poll reminded me of an exchange I had with a college friend that same year.

“Do you still believe in God when He didn’t – or couldn’t – protect you in His own temple?”

This blunt question in my friend’s email brought a smile to my face. Some months before, I had slipped on some spilled water in the ISKCON temple at Juhu, Mumbai. The fall was minor, but the pain was severe. An x-ray showed a cervical hip fracture that had dislocated the bone at its neck.

I was rushed to the devotee-run Bhaktivedanta Hospital in Mumbai, where the orthopedic surgeon Girirāja Dāsa (Dr. Girish Rathore) performed a 4.5-hour sur-



“O best among men [Arjuna], the person who is not disturbed by happiness and distress and is steady in both is certainly eligible for liberation.”

— *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.15

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surgery and advised a three-month rest for healing.

When a former college roommate came to know about the fracture, he wrote offering his good wishes for a speedy recovery. After a couple of email exchanges, he asked his blunt question. I knew he had a good heart, but he had always found it hard to understand why I had thrown away a bright career to become – of all things – a monk (*brahmacārī*). His question about my continued belief in God had reminded me of his loving exasperation with my life's choice and so had brought a smile to my face.

After due prayerful contemplation, I replied to him as follows:

When I started practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I discovered the practical means to counter the adhesive power of problems.

Dear . . . ,

Thank you for your email with your candid question. I am sure several of my acquaintances had this question, but you alone had the forthrightness to raise it upfront, and so I appreciate your candor.

In reciprocation, I will give you my frank answer: a resounding "Yes." Not only do I continue to believe in God, but this accident has increased my faith in Him enormously. Let me explain why.

To start off, I would like to remind you of an incident when we were staying in the same hostel room during our first year in college, in 1993. One night I was gripped by an agonizing pain in the abdominal area. I couldn't reach a doctor till the next morning due to a variety of factors: it was a Sunday night, there had been a public strike the previous day, and we didn't know what to do, as we were away from home in a new place where we had just arrived a few days earlier. As I lay moaning in pain throughout the night, you tried your best to help me. But little could be done till the next morning, when a doctor dealt with the kidney stone that had been piercing – "biting" would be a better word – me from within.

A Self-Conscious Tolerance Strategy

My recent fall was much more painful. But my suffering was much less. Here's why.

When I fell I instinctively tried to remember Kṛṣṇa – not out of devotion, but as a subconscious tolerance strategy. Since my college days, I had read many self-help books and was struck by one consistent theme in them: the enormous role of the mind in shaping our perceptions. Life presents problems to all of us, but we – or rather our mind – determine their sizes. When we let our mind dwell on a problem for too long, we blow it out of proportion and increase our misery many times over. If we take our mind off the problem whenever we are not doing something specific to deal with it, we can prevent the problem – no matter how big – from overwhelming us, and can go on with other aspects of our life.

I had found this strategy to deal with the mind's influence highly sensible – and extremely impractical. It seemed that problems had powerful inbuilt glues that enabled them to stick to the mind. Despite knowing that I was wasting my time and mental energy fretting over an unsolvable problem, I had often found myself utterly unable to take my mind off the problem.

It was only when I started practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness that I discovered the practical means to counter the adhesive power of problems. The first and foremost principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as suggested in the name itself, is to be always conscious of Kṛṣṇa, for this increases our desire and devotion for Him, as stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.9).

A fringe benefit of keeping our mind on Kṛṣṇa is that it no longer dwells on problems. Over the fifteen years that I have been practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I have repeatedly experienced that irritating or painful situations become less troublesome when the mind is taken off the disturbing stimuli and fixed on Kṛṣṇa. Consequently, I have tried to cultivate the habit of calling out Kṛṣṇa's names whenever I have to do something not so pleasant, be it routine, like a cold-water bath on a frigid morning, or occasional, like a medicinal injection in a sensitive body part.

Suffering Happily

On that fateful morning, as soon as I fell I started feeling excruciating pain, like no other pain I had felt before. It seemed as if a live electric current was shooting up and down my thigh with no sign of abating. After several awfully long minutes and a few desperate prayers, I got the idea from within to start reciting verses from the *Bhagavad-gītā.* Within moments, as if by magic, I found my mind getting absorbed; a calming, comforting sense of relief started sweeping over me. For the next several hours as I was taken first to the x-ray clinic, then to the hospital, to the CT scan center, and to the hospital bed, I was almost continuously reciting verses from the *Gītā.* Thanks to the many opportunities to study, speak, and write about the *Gītā* that Kṛṣṇa had presented me, most of its verses were a quick recall away. As I remembered and recited the verses, I found myself relishing one of the most sublime experiences of my life. I had just recently taught the full *Bhagavad-gītā* to a group of devotees, and our many discussions based on the commentaries of various *ācāryas,* especially Śrīla Prabhupāda and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, were fresh in my mind, enhancing my absorption in the *Gītā* verses.

I have often found contemplating the *Gītā* absorbing, but this time, in great pain, the absorption was unparalleled. The main reason for the absorption obviously was not devotion, but necessity. Letting the mind wander away from the *Gītā* verses meant that it would by default go to the hip pain, which was intolerable.

When the doctor at the hospital saw my x-ray and then saw me, he remarked in surprise, "Normally a patient with a fracture like this is never as calm as you are; he is crying in pain."

When I reflect on that remark, I know that I too would have been crying in pain, as I indeed had been several years ago on that frightful night in the hostel. But thankfully in the interim period I had discovered Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I remembered an incident in which my spiritual master, His Holiness Rādhānāth Swami, had asked an ailing godbrother, "How are you?" When he candidly answered, "Suffering," my spiritual master replied, "Suffer happily."

When I had heard of this incident, I had thought of "suffer happily" as delightful wordplay, but now I had a glimpse of the words' profound import: even when our body is suffering, we can still be happy by cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

From Cricket to Kṛṣṇa

In the months since the fracture, I have been analyzing that extraordinary experience of pain relief. Was the relief due specifically to Kṛṣṇa consciousness? Or was it merely due to mental absorption – irrespective of the object of absorption? If I had been a cricket lover, could I have tolerated the pain by absorbing myself in cricket thoughts?

For a decade before I was introduced to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I was a passionate cricket lover; I could effortlessly rattle off the names of not just the players of all the cricket-playing countries, but also the detailed statistics of their stellar performances. From my own experience I can say that absorption of any kind can offer relief; I vaguely recollect seeking relief by mentally going over cherished cricket memories and fantasies while lying in pain on the night of the kidney stone. But experience testifies for me that the relief from Kṛṣṇa consciousness is substantially greater. Moreover, Kṛṣṇa absorption differs from mundane absorption in two fundamental ways.

1. It is independent of externals: Any mundane absorption has nothing to do with my essential being, the real "me." The real me, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.13) explains, is a soul. When I as the soul seek happiness by absorption in cricket, I do so by a chain of misidentifications with temporary externals: I, the soul, identify first with the material body that I presently have, then with the country in which that body has been circumstantially born, and then with the game that is currently popular in that country. As these externals keep changing unpredictably and uncontrollably, so does my happiness. If India wins, I rejoice; if India loses, I lament. But when I seek happiness by absorption in Kṛṣṇa, I am re-identifying myself as what I am eternally: a beloved part of the all-loving Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. That's why happiness through Kṛṣṇa absorption remains accessible amidst all externals, even if India loses and even if the body breaks. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.23) describes the transcendental, matter-independent nature of divine absorption: "The devotees do not suffer from material miseries because they are always filled with divine thoughts."

2. It is enhanced by Kṛṣṇa's reciprocation: Absorption in Kṛṣṇa is not only real, but also reciprocal. Kṛṣṇa is a living, loving person, who graciously reciprocates with our attempts to think of Him. In stark contrast, if we think of cricket it can't reciprocate. Even if we think of not the general game of cricket but the specific cricketers, they, being limited persons like the rest of us, can't reciprocate in the way Kṛṣṇa can.

Kṛṣṇa describes in the *Gītā* (18.58) how He reciprocates with

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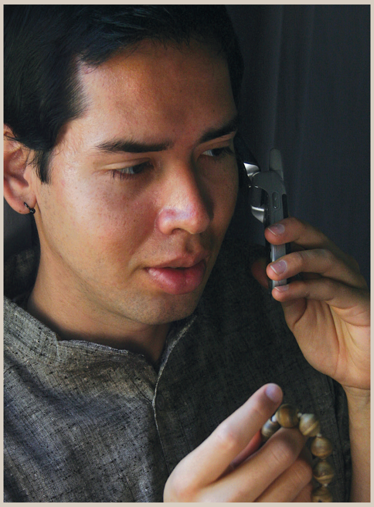


Listen in each Sunday morning as senior devotees give classes on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or speak about topics related to chanting *japa.*

For information, contact Rasāla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa by email at rasala108@gmail.com or online at www.iskconnj.com/japa, or call (732) 501-1018 (evenings, New Jersey).

those who think of Him: "If you become conscious of Me, you will pass over all obstacles by My grace." This verse had become a living reality, thanks to the accident; I had passed over the obstacle of the intolerable pain with the divine grace of absorption in Kṛṣṇa. I know from experience that this divine absorption is not automatic or mechanical; it is a gift of Kṛṣṇa's grace. I have recited the verses from the *Gītā* before and after the accident, and though I generally find such recitation relishable, I have rarely been able to replicate the sublimity of the absorption during the post-fracture period.

We recklessly play our corporate and family games, oblivious of the dangers that may befall us at any moment.

The Protective Value of Pain

Now, coming to your insinuation that Kṛṣṇa didn't protect me, my response is that He did protect me. First, He protected me from the intensity of the pain by giving me His remembrance. Second, He protected me from the complications that could have resulted from the fracture by arranging to send me to a state-of-the-art devotee-run hospital for treatment by a caring and competent doctor who is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Third, and most important, He protected me from the painful illusion that life in the world can be peaceful and joyful.

You will probably be surprised with my use of the words "painful illusion." Let me explain with the example of a medical disorder called Congenital Insensitivity to Pain with Anhidrosis (CIPA). Children with CIPA feel no pain, nor do they sweat or shed tears. They are highly vulnerable to injuring themselves in ways that ordinarily would be prevented by feeling pain. Often they have eye-related problems, like infection due to having unfeelingly rubbed the eyes too hard or too frequently or having scratched them during sleep. CIPA children often play recklessly, being unafraid of banging into anything. From a child's perspective, obliviousness to pain may seem a blessing that grants fearlessness. But from a mature parental perspective, that same obliviousness to pain is seen as a curse that impels foolhardiness. Parents of a CIPA child often have one prayer: let our child feel pain.

Just as intellectual maturity helps the parents understand the protective value of pain in this particular case, spiritual maturity helps us grasp the protective value of pain in general. Unfortunately, we are kept spiritually immature by our present materialistic culture, which by its incessant promises of worldly pleasures makes us forget or neglect the unpalatable yet undeniable signs of suffering that surround us: acquaintances get agonizing cancers, energetic people get mortifyingly immobilized by old age, thousands are instantaneously wiped out by a sudden tsunami. Thus, we unwittingly become like the CIPA patients, recklessly playing our corporate and family games, oblivious to the dangers that may befall us at any moment. And when the dangers come – as they inevitably will, sooner or later – we often resent having been unfairly singled out by misfortune. But everybody will be singled out. Though the specifics of how different people suffer vary according to individual past karma, the universal fact is that everyone has to suffer the inescapable onslaught of old age, disease, and death. Serious contemplation on these miseries, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.9) informs us, begins our spiritual maturation.

By spiritual maturity we gain the understanding that the sufferings of this world:

a. Protect us from the futile and fatal illusion that we as eternal beings can be happy in a temporary setting.

b. Provoke us to redirect our desires to the spiritual level, where we can reclaim the eternal happiness that Kṛṣṇa wants us to relish.

I chose to redirect my desires about fifteen years ago when I made cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness my life's primary focus. For me, the recent accident – with its physical pain and spiritual relief – served as a definite vindication of my choice. Of course, the accident also showed me that I still have a long way to go in redirecting my desires; during the aftermath of the accident, I chanted not out of devotion, but out of necessity. Still, Kṛṣṇa implies in the *Gītā* (7.16) that necessity is often the mother of devotion. I hope and pray that in the future a day will come when I will chant the verses of the *Gītā* with devotion. I feel confident that such a day will surely come if I diligently keep cultivating my absorption in Kṛṣṇa. But till that day, I am happy and grateful to seek relief in Kṛṣṇa memories – and not cricket memories.

Material pains are inevitable for all of us, and we usually either complain publicly or suffer privately. Why not explore another option, offered by spiritual growth: joyful transcendence of the pain?

Your loving friend
in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa,
Chaitanya Charan das

Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānāth Swami. He holds a degree in electronic and telecommunications engineering and serves full time at ISKCON Pune. He is the author of eleven books. To read his other articles or to receive his daily reflection on the Bhagavad-gītā, *"Gita-daily," visit thespiritualscientist.com.*

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to ***www.krishnadays.com****.*

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

Month of Hṛṣīkeśa

(*August 11–September 9*)

SEPTEMBER

2 – Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī, appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

4 – Parśvā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans. (Fasting till noon today; feast tomorrow.)

5 – Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmana, Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa.* Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

7 – Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, father of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master), and a pioneer in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

8 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, foremost teacher of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

9 – Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's accepting *sannyāsa,* the renounced order of life. Third month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from milk).

Month of Padmanābha

(*September 10–October 8*)

15 – Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the United States.

19 – **Indirā Ekādaśī**
Fasting from grains and beans.

OCTOBER

4 – Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, the anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra's victory over the demon Rāvaṇa. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhvācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the thirteenth century.

5 – **Mahā-dvādaśī**
Fasting from grains and beans for Pāśāṅkuśā Ekādaśī. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, great associates and followers of Lord Caitanya.

8 – Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śāradīyā Rāsa-yātrā. Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Murāri Gupta, an associate of Lord Caitanya. Also, the fourth month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from *ūrad dāl*).

Month of Dāmodara

(*October 9–November 7*)

13 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

16 – Appearance of Radha-kunda.

19 – **Ramā Ekādaśī**
Fasting from grains and beans.

23 – Diwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa's temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

24 – Govardhana Pūjā, the festival commemorating the worship of Govardhana Hill by the residents of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa's lifting the hill. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

27 – Disappearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Devotees observe this day with personal remembrances of Śrīla Prabhupāda, readings from his biography, and fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

31 – Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

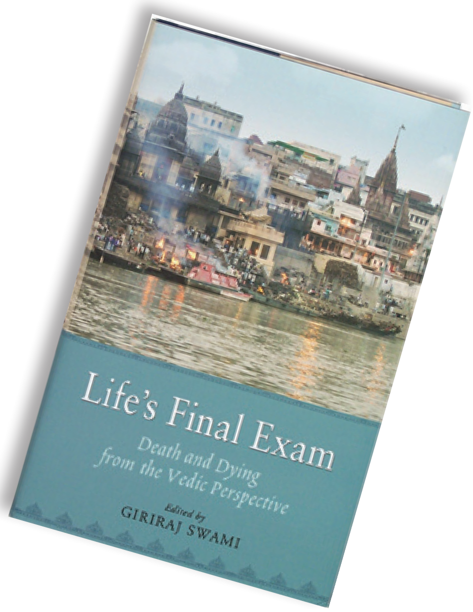
NOVEMBER

3 – **Utthānā Ekādaśī**
Fasting from grains and beans. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gaurakiśora Dāsa Bābājī, the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhakti-siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master. Fasting till noon.

Death And Dying In the Vedic Tradition

A talk presented to the doctors and nurses of San Diego Hospice and The Institute for Palliative Medicine in San Diego, California.

by Girirāja Swami



The book from which this article was excerpted includes contributions by Rādhānāntha Swami, Indradyumna Swami, Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami, Bhakti Tīrtha Swami, Śacīnandana Swami, and others.

IT IS A GREAT pleasure for me to address you all here, especially because this hospice is recognized as one of the best and largest in the world and as the global leader in hospice education.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is considered the essence of the *Vedas*, Lord Kṛṣṇa informs us:

yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ
tyajaty ante kalevaram
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ

"Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kuntī, that state he will attain without fail." (*Gītā* 8.6)

anta-kāle ca mām eva
smaran muktvā kalevaram

yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ
yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ

"And whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body remembering Me alone at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt." (*Gītā* 8.5)

In 1969, when I was a student of psychology at Brandeis University, I met my spiritual teacher, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. In 1970, after studying with him for a year and a half, I accompanied him to India. And in 1977, he taught us by his example how to leave the world in proper, pure consciousness. He retired to Vrindavan, a holy place in India, and surrounded himself with devotees who were always chanting or reading to him from sacred literature. Being in such a holy place was itself conducive to

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Adapted from Life's Final Exam: Death and Dying from the Vedic Perspective, *edited by Girirāja Swami. Available from the Krishna.com Store.*

The Bhaktivedanta Hospice (above) in Vrindavan, India, was developed under the direction of the author. At left, the author gives sacred, purifying water to his disciple Arcā-vigraha Devī Dāsī to help her remember Kṛṣṇa and attain His eternal service.

spiritual consciousness, to God consciousness. And the atmosphere was enhanced by loving disciples singing songs of the Lord and reading books about Him.

Some years later, one of my students, who was older than me, was diagnosed with cancer. She was a renowned artist from South Africa who would travel all over the world to find subjects for painting. At one point, she decided that she wanted to combine her spiritual interests with her artwork, and so she bought a plot of land in the same holy place, Vrindavan, to establish a studio, and she was kind enough to build a floor upstairs for me, for when I would visit. Although the doctors had given her six months, she actually lived for three years. For the last two or three months of her life, I was with her almost constantly, because the goal – not just in the Vedic tradition but in others as well – is to think of God, to chant the name of God or at least hear the name chanted, at the time of death, and I wanted to help her do that.

The time of death is the final examination, and if we can remember God then, we graduate. We are free: no more material bodies.

During the thirty years that I was based in India, I would travel frequently to Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and in Pakistan I came across a book called *The Ninety-nine Names of Allah*. There is a similar work in Sanskrit called *The Thousand Names of Viṣṇu* (another name for Kṛṣṇa), the *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma.* So, in *The Ninety-nine Names of Allah* there is a section about how a pious Muslim should meet death. The best thing a dying Muslim's friends and relatives can do, the book states, is chant the names of God and help the loved one to either chant or at least hear others chant the name of God at the final moment. There is a similar tradition in the Jewish religion, where the ideal is that at the time of death the family and friends are chanting the name of God, or reciting a prayer that contains the name of God. I saw that the same tradition that we have in Vedic philosophy, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is also there in Islam and Judaism, and it is there in other traditions as well.

With my student, we followed the same practice that we had seen with our spiritual master, and devotees would come and chant. The chanting can be done individually in a quiet, meditative way or communally and more loudly, with musical instruments. The whole idea is to help the person fix his or her consciousness on the Supreme and keep it fixed on the Supreme at the time of death. And along with the chanting is the reading and talking about God consciousness.

In Vedic culture, the time of death is considered life's final test. In school we attend lectures, complete assignments, take quizzes, and write the midterm, but whether or not we graduate depends on whether we pass the final examination. In life, passing the final examination means thinking of God. That is why the whole focus at the time of death is to help the person remember God. And the other activities that we perform during our lives, besides freeing us from activities that will result in our taking birth again, are practice for thinking of God. And we get little tests along the way – sicknesses, setbacks, and various hardships. When we face them, do we remember God, or do we look only for material solutions? These are the tests along the way. And then the time of death is the final examination, and if we can remember God then, we graduate. We are free: no more material bodies, no more repetition of birth and death.

Dealing with Physical Pain

Lady (1): In the work we do we are often looking at physical pain. Should medication to alleviate physical pain and suffering be discouraged? Would it interfere with consciousness at the time of death?

Girirāja Swami: Very good question. The goal is to remember God at the time of death. So our general approach is that we want to take enough medication so that the pain is not so excruciating that our consciousness is just absorbed in the pain. But at the same time, we do not want to take so much medication that it dulls us to the point that we cannot really think of God. That is the delicate balance we try to achieve.

Gentleman (1): Is remembering God just saying the name or thinking the name of God, or is it something else – coming back into a state of divine consciousness where one actually feels a connection with God?

Girirāja Swami: All right, so what do we mean when we talk about remembering God? Now, God is a person – that is the first point. He is not a person like you and me, with a body made of flesh and bones. He is spiritual, transcendent. But He is a person. The Bible says, "Man is made in the image of God." We are persons, and so our supreme father or mother must also be a person. This is a difficult point, because we are so conditioned by the material concept of personality that when we hear about God's personality we think in terms of our material experience. Sometimes people think, "If you say that God is a person, you are limiting Him." For example, I am sitting here. Because I am sitting here, I cannot be in the temple at Pacific Beach; I cannot be at my ashram in Santa Barbara. But God – He is a person, but He is in this room, He is in the temple in Pacific Beach, He is in Santa Barbara, He is in our hearts, He is in every molecule and every atom. But He is still a person.

Let us take the example of a person who holds a high office, say the president of a country. The term *president* describes his office. But there is also the person who occupies the office. And that person has a name, an appearance, and personal qualities; he or she engages in certain activities. When we remember the president . . . yes, there are things about the office that we consider, but to really remember the president means to know his name, his form, his features, his qualities, his activities. So, God, too, has a name – He has many names. And He has a form – many forms. And He has many qualities and engages in many activities.

The real goal is to love God, because when you love someone, you naturally think of the person. When we develop love for God, we will naturally remember Him and think of how beautiful His form is, how sublime His qualities are, how wonderful His activities are. We will like repeating His name, just as one would repeat the name of a loved one, and we will think how best we can serve Him and please Him.

But how can we know God well enough that we can actually come to love Him? Well, one distinction between Vedic literatures and other scriptures is that the *Vedas* give more details about the Personality of Godhead. They describe not just that He is the supreme authority, the creator, the maintainer, the destroyer, and the protector, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent – which He is – but also His personal attributes: His names, His forms, His qualities, and His activities. And when one comes to know Him in a more personal way and develops affection and attachment – love – for Him in a personal relationship, it is very easy to think of Him all the time, and very natural to think of Him at the time of death.

Comfort for Family Members

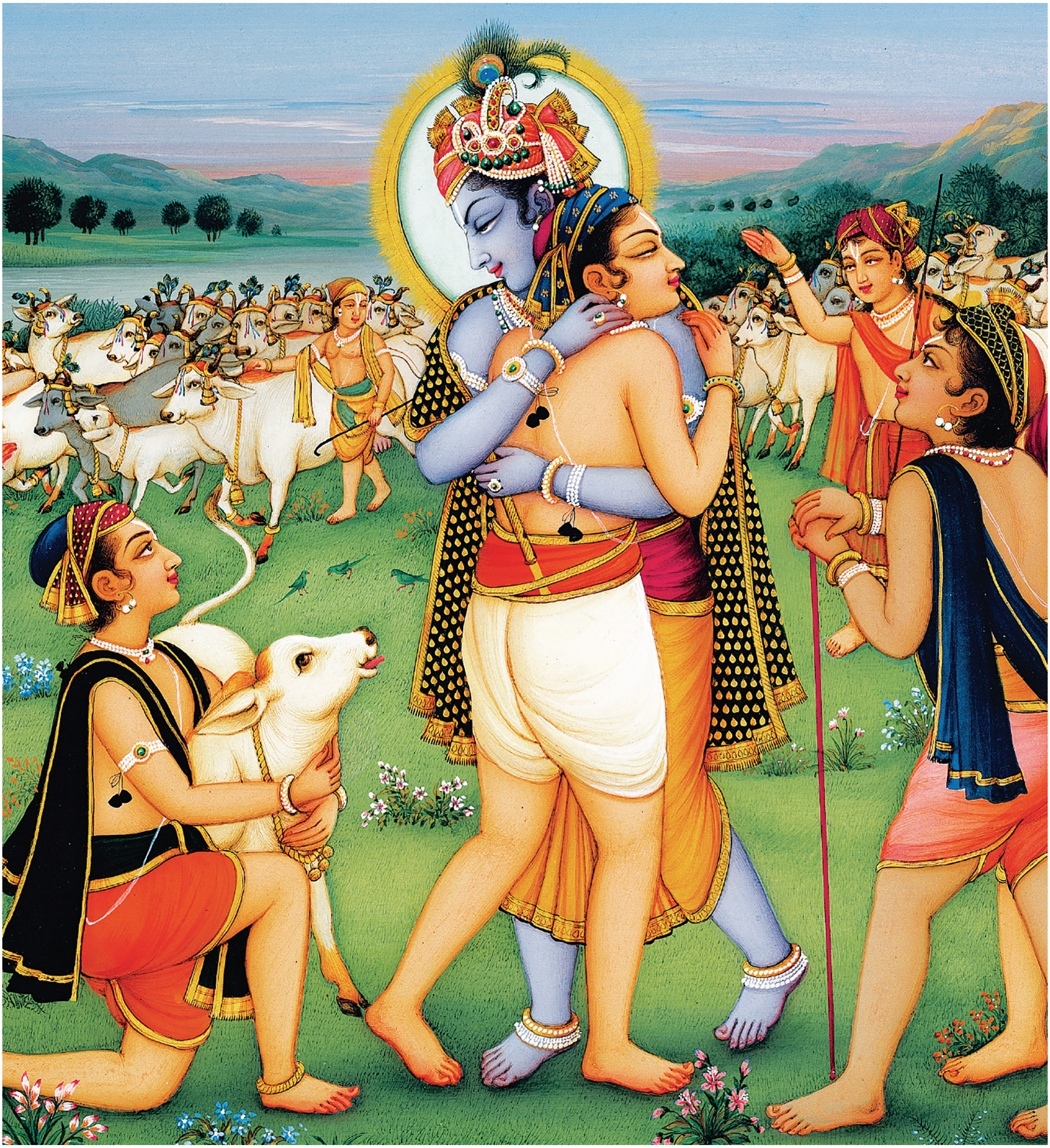
Gentleman (2): As hospice workers we work with the families of patients and deal a lot with the grief, the loss of the soul in this body that they have enjoyed in the physical context. It seems that after a loved one's death, a family member could hear the name of God or think of the name of God, but because we're outside of that person, we don't know what he or she is actually feeling. So in what ways can we bring comfort and assurance to the family members? How can we support them in their grief and the loss of their loved one?

Girirāja Swami: The first instruction of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* which is also a central principle in many other traditions, is that the person is not the body. The person is the soul living in the body. When the person leaves the body, we say that the person is dead, but actually the body was never really alive; it was just animated by the presence of the soul. At the moment the soul leaves the body, all the elements of the body are still there, lying on the bed. You may lament: "Oh, my husband is gone." "My wife is gone." But why do you say they are gone? The body is lying on the bed. You might have thought that the body was your husband or your wife or your father or your mother, but when they pass away, you say, "Oh, my father is gone." "My mother is gone." But the body is still there. So why do you say they are gone? Intuitively, we know that the person was not the body. That loved one is something other than the body that he or she now has left; that person is the soul.

When a person has led a good life, and even more so when he or she has tried to develop a relationship with God and hear the name of God and think of God at the time of death, we can be assured that the person will go to a better destination. There are many emotions. There is the sense of personal loss, that the person whom we loved and shared so many good times with is gone. Out of love, there is also concern. Where is the person now? But if we know that the person has gone to a better place, we feel solace. And in painful illnesses such as cancer, we may also think, "All right. The soul has left this body, and I am sad, but this body had become very

Nartakī Devī Dāsī provides spiritual care to a devotee patient by reading from one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books.

Mandala Publishing / B. G. Sharma. www.mandalaearth.com



In this scene from Sanātana Gosvāmī's Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta, *Gopa Kumāra reunites with Lord Kṛṣṇa. From the perspective of the Vedic scriptures, the focus of end-of-life care is to help the dying remember Kṛṣṇa and thus return to Him.*

difficult; it had become a painful place for the soul to inhabit, so it is actually better that the person has gone elsewhere." The person, the soul, continues to exist. He or she has gone to live somewhere else, where there will be less pain and suffering.

Still, we do not deny the sense of personal loss. Even among transcendentalists there are various emotions. When a perfect yogi leaves the body, we know that the person is qualified to enter the kingdom of God, so we are happy. We are both – happy and sad. We are happy because we know that the person has gone to God, to serve God, but we are sad because we will miss the person's association. Still, such departed souls, we believe, can inspire and guide their loved ones who remain behind.

Then there is also the idea that God is responsive to prayer. When a loved one leaves the body, we know that the soul exists somewhere. We don't know where, but we want to help the soul, because we love that person. So we can pray to God, "Wherever my mother is now" – or my father or whoever – "please be merciful. Please help her come closer to You." And I believe that those prayers will not only help the departed soul but will also give us a chance to continue the relationship and to try to help our loved one even after he or she has left the body.

> **There are stories in the Vedic literature of people who were very sinful but at the last moment chanted God's name and were delivered.**

Then there are the bereaved's own spiritual practices – chanting or meditation or prayer or whatever. Yes, we are attached to and miss our loved one, but through genuine spiritual practice we come in contact with the Supreme. Of course, in the initial stage the bereaved may be too distraught. But then when we do engage in some practice that brings us in touch with God, we feel, "God is there. It is all right. God is taking care. My real relationship is with God. By God's grace I can gain His shelter in the future."

When the Dying Ask "Why?"

Dr. Bharadwaj: Many patients ask, "Why is this happening to me? Is God punishing me?" and this causes a lot of spiritual suffering. How would you approach this?

Girirāja Swami: If someone is suffering from a terminal disease, I would not get into the idea that God is angry with the person or is punishing him. Rather, I would say, "Anyone who takes birth in a material body has to die." That is the point. "Birth, disease, old age, and death are inevitable for every conditioned soul. It may be this disease or that, it may be this symptom of old age or that, or it may be this or that way to death. But these factors are there for everyone. And now that you are in this position, you should use what time you have to develop your relationship with God, so that you do not have to take birth in another material body and suffer through the same cycle again." And if patients feel some specific spiritual regret or guilt, we can hear them with empathy and help them work it out – perhaps take some practical measures to resolve it – and go beyond it.

As for the suffering, on the material platform its value is that it burns up bad karma. That is why many Hindus prefer to tolerate rather than protest, because they know that by tolerating their suffering they are exhausting their sinful reactions, and they feel that they would rather get it over with than try to postpone it and then have to suffer the bad karma later, in some other form. That is on the material platform. On the spiritual platform, the benefit is that suffering can serve to make us more detached from the body and from the world. We are trying to become transcendentalists, yet we still have material attachments. But when there is some upheaval or calamity, we can realize, "Yes, actually the material world is not a happy place. I should not be spending my energy trying to make it happy, because by nature it is not a happy place. I should be using my energy to realize the Supreme and get out of here." Lord Kṛṣṇa confirms in the *Bhagavad-gītā, duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam:* "This material world is a place of misery, and it is temporary."

Dr. Bharadwaj: A lot of patients fear that bad karma is causing their suffering.

Girirāja Swami: Well, it may be. Still, our teacher gave the example of someone drowning and another person coming in a boat to rescue him. The drowning person says, "Now, wait a minute. How did I get here?" But that is not the point. The rescuer would say, "Don't worry about the past; we can talk about that later. You are drowning. Just get in the boat!" So, we are drowning in this body, in this *saṁsāra,* this ocean of repeated birth, death, old age, and disease. Let's not worry how we got here. Let's try to get out. And it is never too late. That is the power of God's name and God's mercy. There are stories in the Vedic literature of people who were very sinful but at the last moment chanted God's name and were delivered. So it is never too late.

Dying Young

Lady (2): A lot of our patients never make it to old age, and it's very difficult for everybody – the patient’s family and us – when they seem to not complete, in our perception, their life. What’s the approach to that?

Girirāja Swami: Their destiny is caused by their activity, their karma. For whatever reason, they did something that is causing them to leave the body before the normal time. But the positive side – we always have to see the positive, the spiritual side – is that, depending on the circumstance, a younger person may be better equipped to think of God at the time of death than an older one who has lost more of his or her faculties. In fact, there is a Sanskrit prayer:

kṛṣṇa tvadīya-pada-pañkaja-
panjarāntam
adyaiva me viśatu mānasa-rāja-
haṁsaḥ
prāṇa-prayāṇa-samaye kapha-
vāta-pittaiḥ
kaṇṭhāvarodhana-vidhau smaraṇaṁ
kutas te

The devotee prays to the Lord, “My dear Kṛṣṇa, please let me die immediately so that the swan of my mind may be encircled by the stem of Your lotus feet. Otherwise, at the time of my final breath, when my throat is choked up, how will it be possible for me to remember You and chant Your holy name?” This may seem contrary to our materialistic culture, which is so preoccupied with pampering and preserving the body, with staying in the body as long as possible and squeezing out of it the last possible drop of pleasure. This prayer, in opposition to that mad, vain pursuit, offers a more philosophical perspective. It is a different perspective on dying, even before old age – one that is positive and spiritual.

Girirāja Swami is based in Carpinteria, California, where he is focusing on Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instruction to him to write. He is the author of Watering the Seed *and* Many Moons: Reflections on Departed Vaishnavas *and is working on several publications, including books about his search for a spiritual master and his early days in the Boston temple, his travels with Śrīla Prabhupāda in India and Śrīla Prabhupāda’s monumental efforts in Bombay, and Vaiṣṇava holy days. He was instrumental in acquiring and developing the Bhaktivedanta Ashram in Govardhan and led the development of the Kirtan Ashram for women, the Bhaktivedanta Hospice, and the Vrindavan Institute of Palliative Care, all in Vrindavan.*

YOU’RE INVITED!

The Sunday Feast

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. Come by and get a taste of the world’s oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast.

(See “Centers,” pages 59–61, or visit directory.krishna.com.)

How to Put BTG in Your Will

After providing for their families and loved ones, subscribers may want to put *Back to Godhead* in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this work. In the USA, bequests are free of estate tax and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government.* You can give needed support for *Back to Godhead* by simply including the following words in your will: *I give, devise, and bequeath to* Back to Godhead, *18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615* (insert amount being given here) *to be used to support* Back to Godhead *and its related activities, including the Krishna.com website.* A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name BTG as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living. It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.

*If you live outside the USA, check the estate tax laws for your country.

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as "the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature," *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

THE SAGES ADVISE KING VENA

Though ready to kill King Vena for his atrocious activities, the sages who enthroned him first try to offer him good counsel.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 14

12 तद्विद्वद्भिरसद्वृत्तो वेनोऽस्माभिः कृतो नृपः
सान्त्वितो यदि नो वाचं न ग्रहीष्यत्यधर्मकृत्
लोकधिक्कारसन्दग्धं दहिष्यामः स्वतेजसा

tad-vidvadbhir asad-vṛtto
veno 'smābhiḥ kṛto nṛpaḥ
sāntvito yadi no vācaṁ
na grahīṣyaty adharma-kṛt
loka-dhikkāra-sandagdhaṁ
dahiṣyāmaḥ sva-tejasā

tat – his mischievous nature; *vidvadbhiḥ* – aware of; *asat-vṛttaḥ* – impious; *venaḥ* – Vena; *asmābhiḥ* – by us; *kṛtaḥ* – was made; *nṛpaḥ* – king; *sāntvitaḥ* – (in spite of) being pacified; *yadi* – if; *naḥ* – our; *vācam* – words; *na* – not; *grahīṣyati* – he will accept; *adharma-kṛt* – the most mischievous; *loka-dhik-kāra* – by public condemnation; *sandagdham* – burned; *dahiṣyāmaḥ* – we shall burn; *sva-tejasā* – by our prowess.

The saintly sages continued thinking: Of course we are completely aware of his mischievous nature. Yet nevertheless we enthroned Vena. If we cannot persuade King Vena to accept our advice, he will be condemned by the public, and we will join them. Thus by our prowess we shall burn him to ashes.

PURPORT: Saintly persons are not interested in political matters, yet they are always thinking of the welfare of the people in general. Consequently they sometimes have to come down to the political field and take steps to correct the misguided government or royalty. However, in Kali-yuga, saintly persons are not as powerful as they previously were. They used to be able to burn any sinful man to ashes by virtue of their spiritual prowess. Now saintly persons have no such power due to the influence of the age of Kali. Indeed, the *brāhmaṇas* do not even have the power to perform sacrifices in which animals are put into a fire to attain a new life. ① Under these circumstances, instead of actively taking part in politics, saintly persons should engage in chanting the *mahā-mantra,* Hare Kṛṣṇa. By the grace of Lord Caitanya, by simply chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra,* the general populace can derive all benefits without political implications.

13 एवमध्यवसायैनं मुनयो गूढमन्यवः
उपव्रज्याब्रुवन् वेनं सान्त्वयित्वा च सामभिः

evam adhyavasāyainaṁ
munayo gūḍha-manyavaḥ

1) Instead of taking part in politics, what can saintly persons do to help the general populace in this age?

upavrajyābruvan venaṁ
sāntvayitvā ca sāmabhiḥ

evam – thus; *adhyavasāya* – having decided; *enam* – him; *munayaḥ* – the great sages; *gūḍha-manyavaḥ* – concealing their anger; *upavrajya* – having approached; *abruvan* – spoke; *venam* – to King Vena; *sāntvayitvā* – after pacifying; *ca* – also; *sāmabhiḥ* – with sweet words.

The great sages, having thus decided, approached King Vena. Concealing their real anger, they pacified him with sweet words and then spoke as follows.

मुनय ऊचुः
14 नृपवर्य निबोधैतद्यत्ते विज्ञापयाम भोः
आयुःश्रीबलकीर्तीनां तव तात विवर्धनम्

munaya ūcuḥ
nṛpa-varya nibodhaitad
yat te vijñāpayāma bhoḥ
āyuḥ-śrī-bala-kīrtīnāṁ
tava tāta vivardhanam

munayaḥ ūcuḥ – the great sages said; *nṛpa-varya* – O best of the kings; *nibodha* – kindly try to understand; *etat* – this; *yat* – which; *te* – to you; *vijñāpayāma* – we shall instruct; *bhoḥ* – O King; *āyuḥ* – duration of life; *śrī* – opulences; *bala* – strength; *kīrtīnām* – good reputation; *tava* – your; *tāta* – dear son; *vivardhanam* – which will increase.

The great sages said: Dear King, we have come to give you good advice. Kindly hear us with great attention. By doing so, your duration of life and your opulence, strength, and reputation will increase.

PURPORT: ② According to Vedic civilization, in a monarchy the king is advised by saintly persons and sages. By taking their advice, he can become the greatest executive power, and everyone in his kingdom will be happy, peaceful, and prosperous. The great kings were very responsible in taking the instructions given by great saintly personalities. The kings used to accept the instructions given by great sages like Parāśara, Vyāsadeva, Nārada, Devala, and Asita. In other words, they would first accept the authority of saintly persons and then execute their monarchical power. Unfortunately, in the present age of Kali, the head of government does not follow the instructions given by the saintly persons; therefore neither the citizens nor the men of government are very happy. Their duration of life is shortened, and almost everyone is wretched and bereft of bodily strength and spiritual power. If citizens want to be happy and prosperous in this democratic age, they should not elect rascals and fools who have no respect for saintly persons.

2) In Vedic civilization, who advises the king?
3) What is the effect of the king's performing devotional service?

15 धर्म आचरितः पुंसां वान्मनःकायबुद्धिभिः
लोकान् विशोकान् वितरत्यथानन्त्यमसङ्गिनाम्

dharma ācaritaḥ puṁsāṁ
vāṅ-manaḥ-kāya-buddhibhiḥ
lokān viśokān vitaraty
athānantyam asaṅginām

dharmaḥ – religious principles; *ācaritaḥ* – executed; *puṁsām* – to persons; *vāk* – by words; *manaḥ* – mind; *kāya* – body; *buddhibhiḥ* – and by intelligence; *lokān* – the planets; *viśokān* – without misery; *vitarati* – bestow; *atha* – certainly; *ānantyam* – unlimited happiness, liberation; *asaṅginām* – to those free from material influence.

Those who live according to religious principles and who follow them by words, mind, body, and intelligence are elevated to the heavenly kingdom, which is devoid of all miseries. Being thus rid of the material influence, they achieve unlimited happiness in life.

PURPORT: The saintly sages herein instruct that the king or head of government should set an example by living a religious life. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā,* religion means worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should not simply make a show of religious life, but should perform devotional service perfectly with words, mind, body, and good intelligence. ③ By doing so, not only will the king or government head rid himself of the contamination of the material modes of nature, but the general public will also, and they will all become gradually elevated to the kingdom of God and go back home, back to Godhead. The instructions given herein serve as a summary of how the head of government should execute his ruling power and thus attain happiness not only in this life but also in the life after death.

16 स ते मा विनशेद्वीर प्रजानां क्षेमलक्षणः
यस्मिन् विनष्टे नृपतिरैश्वर्यादवरोहति

sa te mā vinaśed vīra
prajānāṁ kṣema-lakṣaṇaḥ
yasmin vinaṣṭe nṛpatir
aiśvaryād avarohati

saḥ – that spiritual life; *te* – by you; *mā* – do not; *vinaśet* – let it be spoiled; *vīra* – O hero; *prajānām* – of the people; *kṣema-lakṣaṇaḥ* – the cause of prosperity; *yasmin* – which; *vinaṣṭe* – being spoiled; *nṛpatiḥ* – the king; *aiśvaryāt* – from opulence; *avarohati* – falls down.

The sages continued: O great hero, for this reason you should not be the cause of spoiling the spiritual life of the general populace. If their spiritual life is spoiled because of your activities, you will certainly fall down from your opulent and royal position.

PURPORT: ④ Formerly, in practically all parts of the world, there were monarchies, but gradually as monarchy declined from the ideal life of religion to the godless life of sense gratification, monarchies all over the world were abolished. ⑤ However, simply abolishing monarchy and replacing it with democracy is not sufficient unless the government men are religious and follow in the footsteps of great religious personalities.

17 राजन्नसाध्वमात्येभ्यश्चोरादिभ्यः प्रजा नृपः
रक्षन् यथा बलिं गृह्णन्निह प्रेत्य च मोदते

rājann asādhv-amātyebhyaś
corādibhyaḥ prajā nṛpaḥ
rakṣan yathā baliṁ gṛhṇann
iha pretya ca modate

rājan – O King; *asādhu* – mischievous; *amātyebhyaḥ* – from ministers; *cora-ādibhyaḥ* – from thieves and rogues; *prajāḥ* – the citizens; *nṛpaḥ* – the king; *rakṣan* – protecting; *yathā* – accordingly as; *balim* – taxes; *gṛhṇan* – accepting; *iha* – in this world; *pretya* – after death; *ca* – also; *modate* – enjoys.

The saintly persons continued: When the king protects the citizens from the disturbances of mischievous ministers as well as from thieves and rogues, he can, by virtue of such pious activities, accept taxes given by his subjects. Thus a pious king can certainly enjoy himself in this world as well as in the life after death.

PURPORT: The duty of a pious king is described very nicely in this verse. ⑥ His first and foremost duty is to give protection to the citizens from thieves and rogues as well as from ministers who are no better than thieves and rogues. Formerly, ministers were appointed by the king and were not elected. Consequently, if the king was not very pious or strict, the ministers would become thieves and rogues and exploit the innocent citizens. It is the king's duty to see that there is no increase of thieves and rogues either in the government secretariat or in the departments of public affairs. If a king cannot give protection to citizens from thieves and rogues both in the government service and in public affairs, he has no right to exact taxes from them. ⑦ In other words, the king or the government that taxes can levy taxes from the citizens only if the king or government is able to give protection to the citizens from thieves and rogues.

In the Twelfth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.1.40) there is a description of these thieves and rogues in government service. As stated, *prajās te bhakṣayiṣyanti mlecchā rājanya-rūpiṇaḥ:* "These proud *mlecchas* [persons who are less than *śūdras*], representing themselves as kings, will tyrannize their subjects, and their subjects, on the other hand, will cultivate the most vicious practices. Thus practicing evil habits and behaving foolishly, the subjects will be like their rulers." The idea is that in the democratic days of Kali-yuga, the general population will fall down to the standard of *śūdras.* ⑧ As stated (*kalau śūdra-sambhavaḥ*), practically the whole population of the world will be *śūdra.* A *śūdra* is a fourth-class man who is only fit to work for the three higher social castes. Being fourth-class men, *śūdras* are not very intelligent. Since the population is fallen in these democratic days, they can only elect a person in their category, but a government cannot run very well when it is run by *śūdras.* The second class of men, known as *kṣatriyas,* are especially meant for governing a country under the direction of saintly persons (*brāhmaṇas*) who are supposed to be very intelligent. In other ages – in Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, and Dvāpara-yuga – the general populace was not so degraded, and the head of government was never elected. The king was the supreme executive personality, and if he caught any ministers stealing like thieves and rogues, he would at once have them killed or dismissed from service. As it was the duty of the king to kill thieves and rogues, it was similarly his duty to immediately kill dishonest ministers in government service. By such strict vigilance, the king could run the government very well, and the citizens would be happy to have such a king. The conclusion is that unless the king is perfectly able to give protection to the citizens from rogues and thieves, he has no right to levy taxes from the citizens for his own sense gratification. However, if he gives all protection to the citizens and levies taxes on them, he can live very happily and peacefully in this life, and at the end of this life be elevated to the heavenly kingdom or even to the Vaikuṇṭhas, where he will be happy in all respects.

4) Why have monarchies been demolished all over the world?
5) What is required for democracies to be effective?
6) What is the king's first and foremost duty?
7) On what condition is the king justified in collecting taxes from the citizens?
8) To what class do most people belong in Kali-yuga?

18 यस्य राष्ट्रे पुरे चैव भगवान् यज्ञपूरुषः
इज्यते स्वेन धर्मेण जनैर्वर्णाश्रमान्वितैः

yasya rāṣṭre pure caiva
bhagavān yajña-pūruṣaḥ
ijyate svena dharmeṇa
janair varṇāśramānvitaiḥ

yasya – whose; *rāṣṭre* – in the state or kingdom; *pure* – in the cities; *ca* – also; *eva* – certainly; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *yajña-pūruṣaḥ* – who is the enjoyer of all sacrifices; *ijyate* – is worshiped; *svena* – their own; *dharmeṇa* – by occupation; *janaiḥ* – by the people; *varṇa-āśrama* – the system of eight social orders; *anvitaiḥ* – who follow.

The king is supposed to be pious in whose state and cities the general populace strictly observes the system of eight social orders of varṇa and āśrama, and where all citizens engage in worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead by their particular occupations.

PURPORT: The state's duty and the citizen's duty are very nicely explained in this verse. The activities of the government head, or king, as well as the activities of the citizens, should be so directed that ultimately everyone engages in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ⑨ The king, or government head, is supposed to be the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is therefore supposed to see that things go on nicely and that the citizens are situated in the scientific social order comprised of four *varṇas* and four *āśramas.* ⑩ In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is stated that unless people are educated or situated in the scientific social order comprised of four *varṇas* (*brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya,* and *śūdra*) and four *āśramas* (*brahmacarya, gṛhastha, vānaprastha,* and *sannyāsa*), society can never be considered real human society, nor can it make any advancement towards the ultimate goal of human life. It is the duty of the government to see that things go on in terms of *varṇa* and *āśrama.*

As stated herein, *bhagavān yajña-pūruṣaḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the *yajña-pūruṣa.* As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.29): *bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasām.* ⑪ Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate purpose of all sacrifice. He is also the enjoyer of all sacrifices; therefore He is known as *yajña-pūruṣa.* The word *yajña-pūruṣa* indicates Lord Viṣṇu or Lord Kṛṣṇa, or any Personality of Godhead in the category of *viṣṇu-tattva.* In perfect human society, people are situated in the orders of *varṇa* and *āśrama* and are engaged in worshiping Lord Viṣṇu by their respective activities. Every citizen engaged in an occupation renders service by the resultant actions of his activities. That is the perfection of life. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.46):

9) Of whom is the king supposed to be the representative?
10) What does the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* say is required for society to be considered real human society?
11) Why is Kṛṣṇa known as *yajña-pūruṣa*?

yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānāṁ
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam
sva-karmaṇā tam abhyarcya
siddhiṁ vindati mānavaḥ

"By worship of the Lord, who is the source of all beings and who is all-pervading, man can, in the performance of his own duty, attain perfection."

Thus the *brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, śūdras,* and *vaiśyas* must execute their prescribed duties as these duties are stated in the *śāstras.* In this way everyone can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. The king, or government head, has to see that the citizens are thus engaged. In other words, the state or the government must not deviate from its duty by declaring that the state is a secular one, which has no interest in whether or not the people advance in *varṇāśrama-dharma.* Today people engaged in government service and people who rule over the citizens have no respect for the *varṇāśrama-dharma.* They complacently feel that the state is secular. In such a government, no one can be happy. The people must follow the *varṇāśrama-dharma,* and the king must see that they are following it nicely.

19 तस्य राज्ञो महाभाग भगवान् भूतभावनः
परितुष्यति विश्वात्मा तिष्ठतो निजशासने

tasya rājño mahā-bhāga
bhagavān bhūta-bhāvanaḥ
parituṣyati viśvātmā
tiṣṭhato nija-śāsane

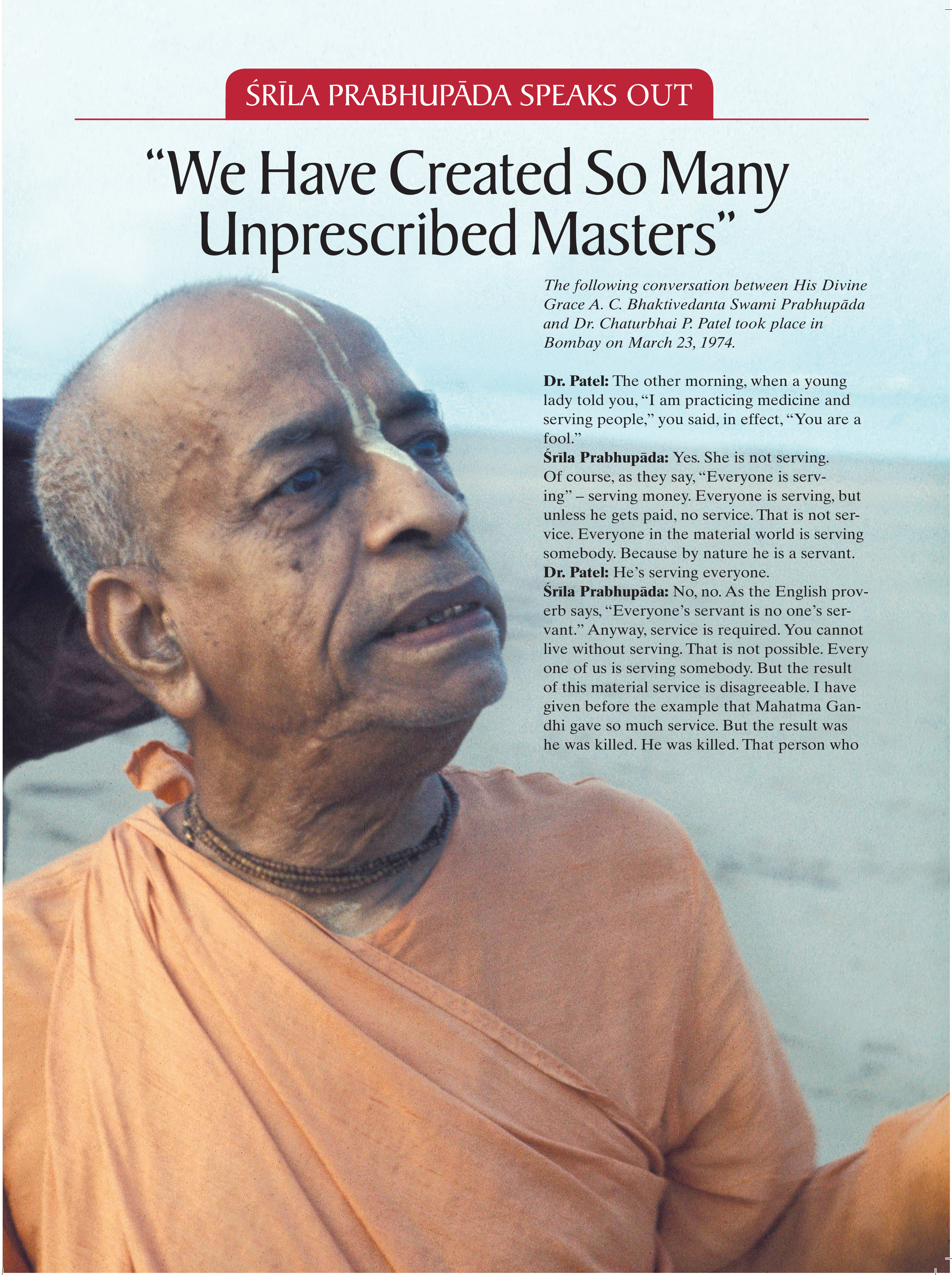
tasya – with him; *rājñaḥ* – the king; *mahā-bhāga* – O noble one; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhūta-bhāvanaḥ* – who is the original cause of the cosmic manifestation; *parituṣyati* – becomes satisfied; *viśva-ātmā* – the Supersoul of the entire universe; *tiṣṭhataḥ* – being situated; *nija-śāsane* – in his own governing situation.

O noble one, if the king sees that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original cause of the cosmic manifestation and the Supersoul within everyone, is worshiped, the Lord will be satisfied.

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

“We Have Created So Many Unprescribed Masters”



The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and Dr. Chaturbhai P. Patel took place in Bombay on March 23, 1974.

Dr. Patel: The other morning, when a young lady told you, “I am practicing medicine and serving people,” you said, in effect, “You are a fool.”
Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. She is not serving. Of course, as they say, “Everyone is serving” – serving money. Everyone is serving, but unless he gets paid, no service. That is not service. Everyone in the material world is serving somebody. Because by nature he is a servant.
Dr. Patel: He’s serving everyone.
Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. As the English proverb says, “Everyone’s servant is no one’s servant.” Anyway, service is required. You cannot live without serving. That is not possible. Every one of us is serving somebody. But the result of this material service is disagreeable. I have given before the example that Mahatma Gandhi gave so much service. But the result was he was killed. He was killed. That person who

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killed him did not think, "Oh, this old gentleman has given so much service to us. Even if I do not agree with him, how can I kill him?" But people are so very ungrateful – you see? – that whatever service you may render, they'll never be satisfied.

Dr. Patel: Gandhi's service – he was doing his prescribed duty.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, actually. But first of all, let us define service. What is service? Service means there is a servant and a master. And service is the transaction between the servant and his master. But we have created so many unprescribed masters. The wife master, the family master, the country master, the legislative master, this master, that master – you see? And we are giving service. "Oh, it is my duty. I am giving service." But ask any of these masters, "Are you satisfied?" He'll say, "What have you done?"

Dr. Patel: The master won't be satisfied.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No. These self-created masters will never be satisfied. And really, by serving them we are trying to serve and satisfy our own senses. I am giving service to my wife because I think she will satisfy my senses. Therefore I'm not giving service to my wife – I'm giving service to my senses. So ultimately, we are servants of our own senses. We are nobody's servants. This is our material position. Yes, ultimately, we are servants of our senses.

Constitutionally, I am a servant, but at the present moment, being conditioned by the material nature, I am giving service to my senses. But my senses are not independent. They are totally dependent. For instance, I am now moving my hands, but if the true master of my hand, Kṛṣṇa, paralyzes it – no more moving. Nor can I revive the moving capacity of my hand. So although I am claiming I am master of my hand, master of my leg, and so on, actually I am not. The master is different.

One of Kṛṣṇa's other names is Hṛṣīkeśa, "the creator and master of all senses." Therefore we should transfer our service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. *Hṛṣīkena hṛṣīkeśa-sevanaṁ bhaktir ucyate:* we have tried in so many ways to serve our senses, but when we engage our senses in serving the master of the senses, we get the spiritual satisfaction of *bhakti,* devotion. Devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is also service, but it is not service to the inert senses – it is service to the living master of the senses. This is real satisfaction. So constitutionally I am a servant. I cannot become the master. My position is that I have to serve. And if I don't serve the master of the senses, then I will have to serve the senses and go unsatisfied.

Dr. Patel: Now, the fact remains that each man does have prescribed duties to wife, family, country, and government.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes.

Dr. Patel: We have different kinds of bodies and senses, also, and that gives us different duties. One man has to act as a priest or teacher, another as an administrator or military man, another as a farmer or merchant, and still another as a laborer or craftsman. And when a man does his duty without expectation of any fruits, this is as good as devotion to the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: No, no. Not expecting any fruits is not enough. You must do more than that. You must give the fruits unto Kṛṣṇa. Give the result of your prescribed duties to Kṛṣṇa. You can earn a million dollars, but don't simply take it all yourself or lavish it on your family. Give this fruit to Kṛṣṇa. That is real service.

Just like you are working as a medical practitioner. So give your earnings to Kṛṣṇa. Then you become perfect. We simply have to see that by our work Kṛṣṇa is satisfied. Kṛṣṇa says *yat karoṣi:* "Never mind what you are doing." *Tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam:* "Give Me it." [Śrīla Prabhupāda laughs.] And people say, "No, no, no, sir. I am serving You, but the money is in my pocket."

Dr. Patel: Everything is Kṛṣṇa's. How can you give anything? Even a leaf?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Oh, yes, yes. Just like these boys and girls are giving. They are giving their whole life. They do not ask me for money: "My dear sir, please give me some money; I will go to the cinema." They are serving, and they have given everything. This is service. They are not poor. They're earning, but everything for Kṛṣṇa.

If you divide your income partially – "Some percentage for Kṛṣṇa, some percentage for my sense gratification" – then Kṛṣṇa says, *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham:* "As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly, proportionately." If you have spent cent percent of your energy for Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is cent percent for you. And if you have spent one percent for Kṛṣṇa. He is one percent for you. Responsive cooperation.

This movement has advanced so much all over the world because we have these boys and girls who have dedicated everything for Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it has so quickly advanced. They do not think of anything personal. Only how to serve Kṛṣṇa. *Saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam:* the highest perfection is to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

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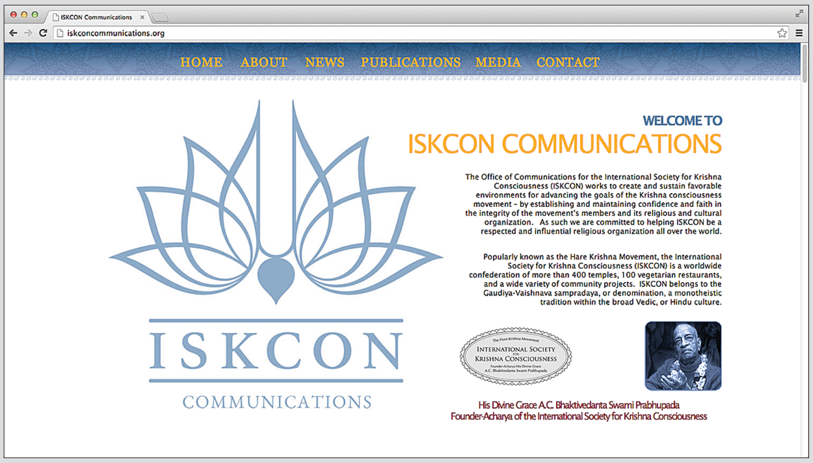
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The site is created to provide information about the goals of ISKCON and to serve as a conduit for journalists, writers, and media organizations seeking to learn about ISKCON or obtain comment for stories, articles, or news segments they may be creating.

The About link on the toolbar gives background information about ISKCON, describing its place in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya,* its basis in the Vedic literature, and the spiritual renaissance instigated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu that led to the formation of ISKCON.

In the About section there is also a description Śrīla Prabhupāda's work as the founder/*ācārya* of ISKCON, his place in the Vaiṣṇava lineage, and his efforts to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness by his translation work and extensive travels. To give further insight into the Society, this section also presents the Seven Purposes of ISKCON.

The News link connects to the section for ISKCON News, "the news agency for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness." This section also contains links to other websites that provide reliable, balanced, and timely information of interest to devotees, friends, and people interested in ISKCON.

Under Publications you will find a list of links to related ISKCON documents and journals that provide a deeper look into the world of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism.

The Media section provides links to the official ISKCON Media Kit and to a source for stock photos of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement that can be used in publications. The Media Kit is designed to provide accurate facts for journalists and media officers to use when presenting stories about ISKCON. This improves the consistency and integrity of reports about the Society. The stock photos have a similar purpose. They allow media officers and journalists to visually represent ISKCON appropriately in their work.

The Contact section reveals a world map providing the contact details for ISKCON Communications Directors around the world. This makes it much easier for journalists and media officers to get in touch with ISKCON officers authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the Society.

—*Antony Brennan*

Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare

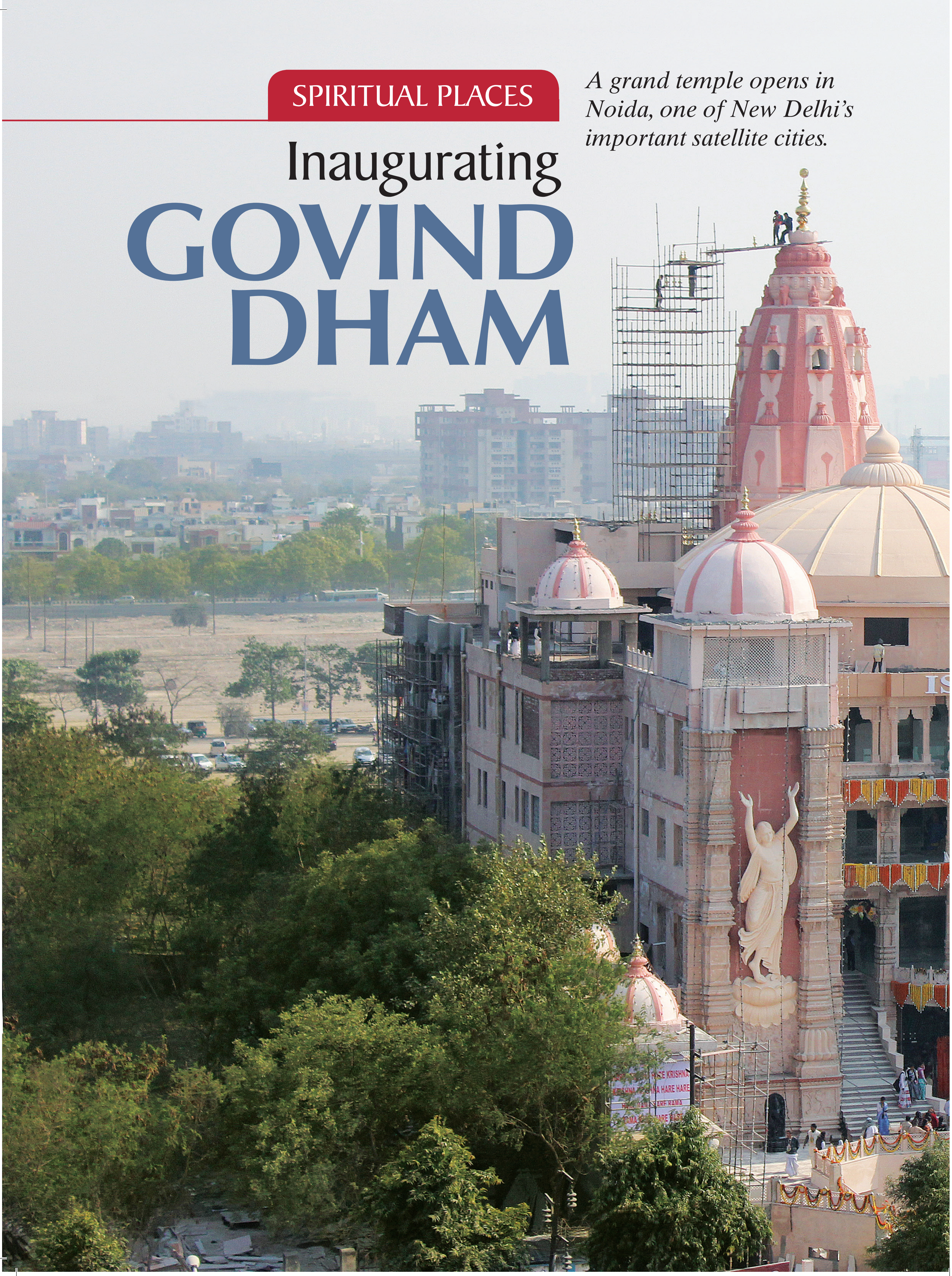
PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama"). To hear Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting, go to krishna.com/hare-krishna-maha-mantra.

Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa

SPIRITUAL PLACES

Inaugurating
GOVIND DHAM

A grand temple opens in Noida, one of New Delhi's important satellite cities.

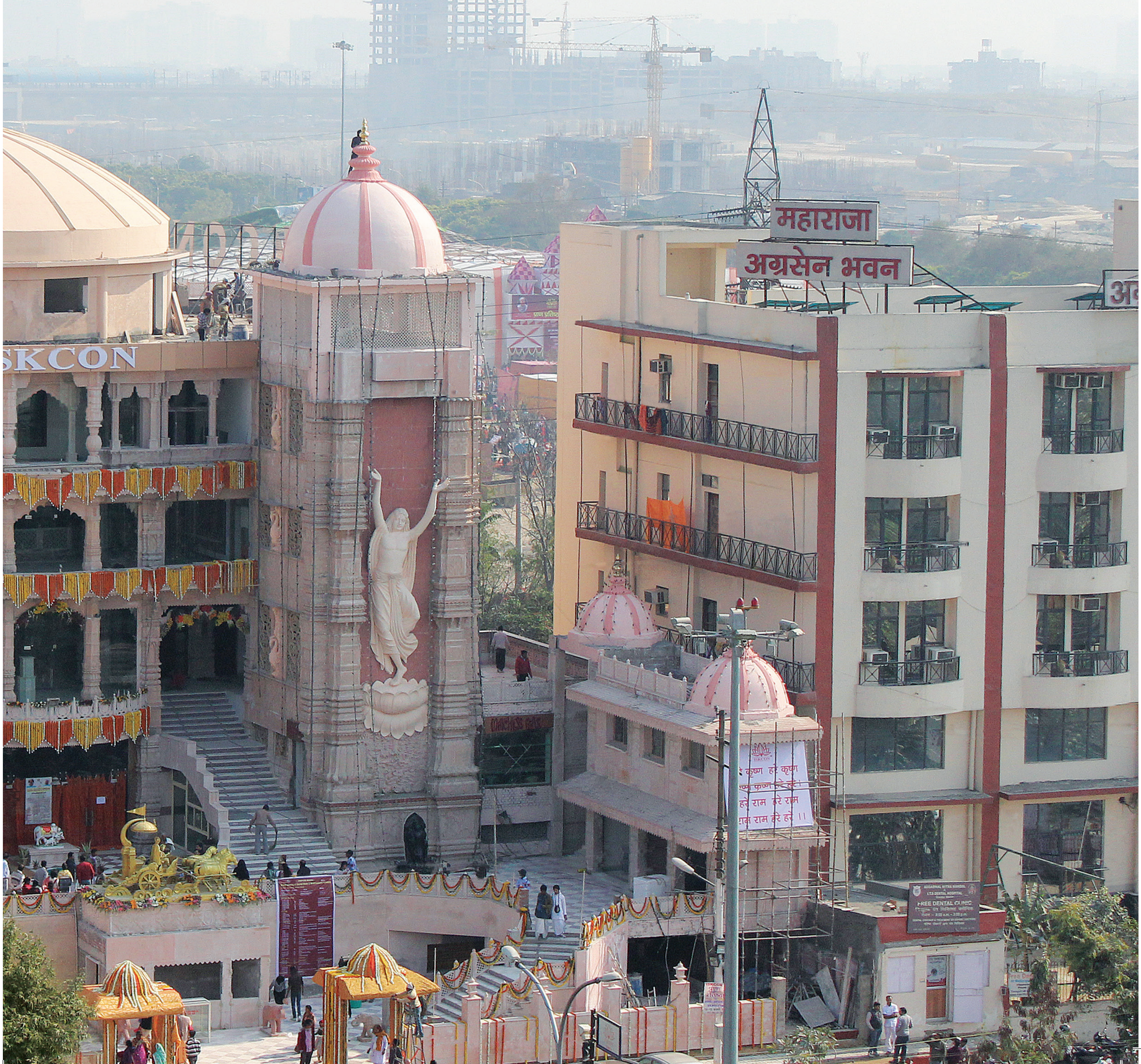


by Lokanāth Swami

Photos by Aniruddha Dāsa, Ujjawal Ganguly, Atul Agrawal, and Bhakta Prithvi Raj

AFTER ONE CROSSES the Yamuna River from Delhi, India's overcrowded capital city, the sight of Noida, a large satellite city in the National Capital Region, creates a welcoming impression. Since 1970, eight hundred thousand people have moved to Noida (short for New Okhla Industrial Development Authority) to take advantage of its wide roads, expansive residential townships, successful economy, excellent infrastructure, and emergence as a major hub for outsourcing and education. Naturally devotees in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness saw an opportunity to build and sustain a congregation here, and their vision proved to be true. Devotees opened a small center here in 1998. Over time, the congregation of families, working youths, and college students grew, as did the need for a suitable temple. Following almost eight years of planning and development, the temple opened on February 12, 2014, with the installation of deities of Rādhā-Govinda,

One hundred and thirty feet up (opposite page), devotees put finishing touches on the temple spire as a new commercial center rises in the background of this ever-growing township.



Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks the Bhagavad-gītā *to Arjuna (right). Prominently positioned at the front of the temple, the sculpture signifies Govind Dham's commitment to spiritual education. Below: Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. The opening ceremonies included the installation of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi (opposite page, top), the deity forms of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu.*

Gaura-Nitāi (Caitanya and Nityānanda), and Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā.

Situated on a main boulevard and adjacent to Krishna Jayanti Park (owned by the government, maintained by ISKCON), the temple is highly accessible and visible. As modern and progressive as the city it overlooks, still it represents the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava tradition. On either side of the front of the temple are giant reliefs of Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda, and the temple opened on the anniversary of Lord Nityānanda's appearance.

ISKCON Establishes Itself

The plot ISKCON secured is small, so the strategy was to "go vertical" to accommodate all of a temple's typical elements. Topping the seven stories is a sixty-foot spire, its tip 130 feet from the ground.

In the mid 1970s Śrīla Prabhupāda supervised the design of the first full-fledged ISKCON temple in a major Indian city, in Mumbai

An International Effort

A list of items and their sources.

- Rādhā-Govinda and Gaura-Nitāi: Jaipur, Rajasthan
- Ornate carvings and designs in stone and marble: Rajasthan
- Jagannātha deities: Sri Jagannath Puri Dhama, Odisha
- Stone for Jaya and Vijaya: Odisha
- *Mūrti* of Śrīla Prabhupāda: Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh
- The *kalaśas* ("pots" under the spire): Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu
- *Siṁhāsanas* (deity thrones): Vallabha Vidyanagar, Gujarat
- Deity clothing: Nagpur, Maharashtra
- Deity wigs: Los Angeles
- Lights: China
- Flowers: Singapore
- *Abhiṣeka* waters: Many sacred rivers and lakes of India, including Radha-kunda and the Ganga
- Craftsmen, painters, carvers, carpenters, engineers, architects, masons, and laborers: From all over India

A statue at the entrance honors the cow, favored by Lord Kṛṣṇa (the transcendental cowherd boy), and one of humanity's mothers because she provides us milk. At left, Garuḍa faces the altar from inside the temple's balcony window.

VT-JMD
Himalayan Heli Services

(Juhu). The Noida temple follows a similar model, with a large temple room, an auditorium, an adjoining guesthouse, a restaurant, a hall for weddings and birthday celebrations, a floor for education, and a kitchen and bedrooms in a residential wing. The temple, shops, offices, and hall are ready for use.

The stone façade, with balconies, is similar to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's sixteenth-century Rādhā-Govinda temple in Vrindavan. The façade and the interior also feature hand-carved stone peacocks, elephants, a hundred intricate pillars, *jalis* (latticework), *jharokhas* (balconies), and *chhatris* (domed pavilions).

A dedicated, well-organized team of devotees prepared and served the Lord's prasādam *to thousands of guests.*

A Boon for Outreach

The new temple will increase and improve ISKCON Noida's outreach, festival planning, and congregational development. The building will include the Bhaktivedanta Academy, ensuring that education will be easily available to the congregation. The Academy will have five classrooms, administration space, two large seminar

A helicopter (left) showers flowers on the procession from the installation tent to the temple. The photos on this page are scenes from the procession.

halls, a play school for young children, and a library where visitors can sit at computers to read e-books or download lectures and *kīrtanas.*

Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted ISKCON temples to be places of education, and the Noida temple already offers courses in partnership with the Vrindavan Institute for Higher Education, organized by devotees at ISKCON's Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple in Vrindavan. A commercial center being built a few blocks away will give devotees quick access to many people, improving the opportunity to attract the spiritually inclined to true higher education.

The Temple Courtyard

On a visit to the temple, at the entrance you see an elevated platform holding a nearly life-sized sculpture of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on a chariot. The temple's planners chose this scene because Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna's conversation, *Bhagavad-gītā,* epitomizes spiritual education. Because Lord Kṛṣṇa's temple is a replica of the spiritual world, at the foot of the staircases on either side of the entrance stand the traditional statues of Jaya and Vijaya, doorkeepers in the spiritual world. A statue at the entrance honors the cow, favored by Lord Kṛṣṇa (the transcendental cowherd boy), and one of humanity's mothers because

ISKCON
ISKCON

she provides us milk. Inside the temple's balcony window you see Garuḍa, the Supreme Lord's eternal winged carrier, ready to carry Him anywhere He desires.

Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Preside

A skilled craftsman carved the beautiful white-marble form of Rādhā and the black-marble form of Govinda, following directions given in the Vedic scriptures. The scriptures and the Vaiṣṇava tradition teach us that the duly installed deity is in fact an incarnation of the Lord,

Lord Baladeva gets bathed with one of the ingredients of the ceremonial bath (left). Above, priests offer ghee and grains to one of the sacred fires. Below: the massive tents where the installation was held and backup support was provided.

During the entertainment section of the program, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and the gopīs *(top) enact a peacock pastime. At left, acrobats create the image of Lord Kṛṣṇa dancing on the serpent Kāliya.*

known as *arcā-avatāra* ("incarnation for worship"). The Lord appears as the deity in the temple to accept the worship of His devotees.

"The spiritual master's duty," Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "is to engage the disciples in deity worship. In all our centers we have the method of deity worship: to dress the deity very nicely, to cleanse the temple very nicely, to offer nice foodstuffs to the deity and accept the remnants of the Lord's foodstuff as our food."

Following the tradition of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism, as well as Śrīla Prabhupāda's general practice, devotees at ISKCON Noida worship two other sets of deities besides Rādhā-Govinda: Gaura-Nitāi, and Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā.

The Special Moment

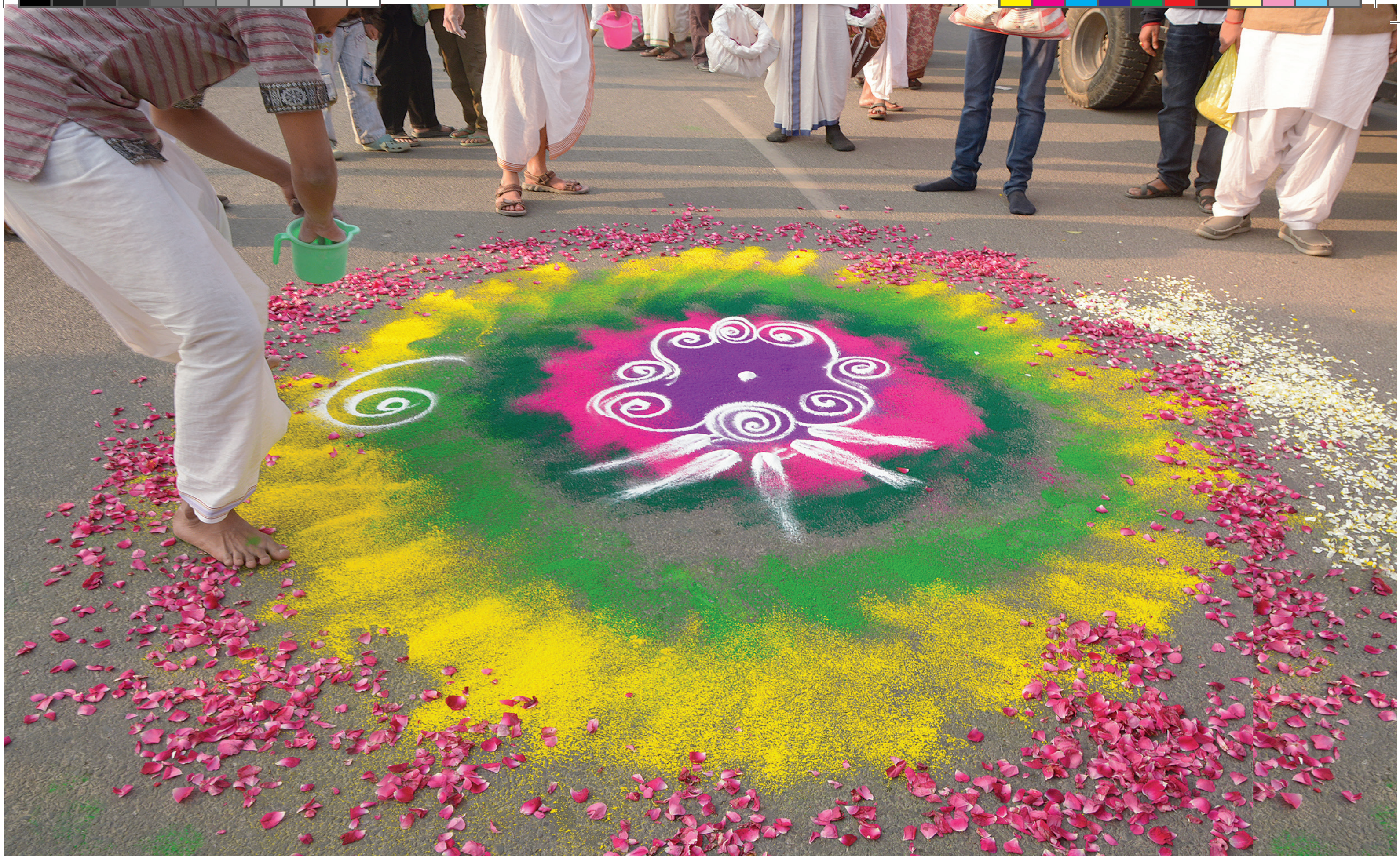
Behind the temple a huge tent on an empty lot served as the site for the sacred installation, which started Tuesday evening and concluded with the temple's official inauguration on Thursday. As the elaborate ritual was about to begin, thousands anxiously awaited their first viewing of the deities, hidden onstage behind curtains. Finally the curtains opened, and the moment surely captured everyone's heart eternally. As if a flood of light engulfed the tent, the deities' radiant beauty poured forth and the devotees roared with delight and amazement.

From the few who could speak came shouts of "*Haribol!*" "Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī stole the show!" and "Wow! So incredibly beautiful!"

It was apparent to everyone that these deities were not concealing their beauty at all. At that moment we could also truly appreciate the extraordinary skill and artistic flair of the craftsmen.

As prescribed, the deities had their eyes covered with cloth when the curtains opened during the Tuesday-evening ceremony. After some rituals, the *netronmilan* ("eye opening") was held, and they opened their eyes for the first time, mercifully gazing upon the worshipers, who received great spiritual

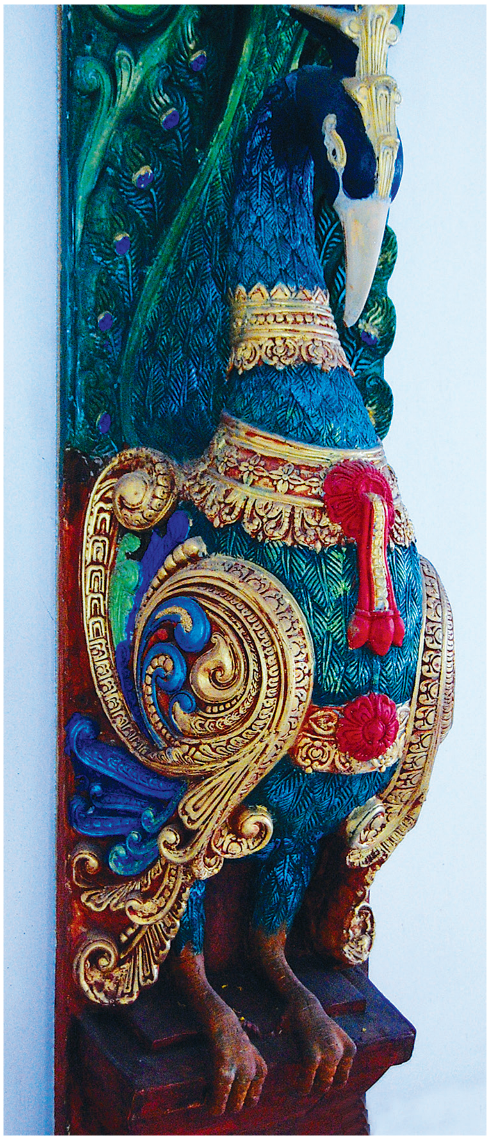
One of the chandeliers hanging in the temple (above). At left, a gatekeeper of Vaikuṇṭha stands guard. Below, the temple officially opens (left to right): Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Goswami; Mr. Surendra Singh Nagar, Member of Parliament; Mr. B. P. Agarwal, chairman of the steering committee of ISKCON Noida and chairman & managing director of Surya Foods & Agro Ltd.; Lokanāth Swami.

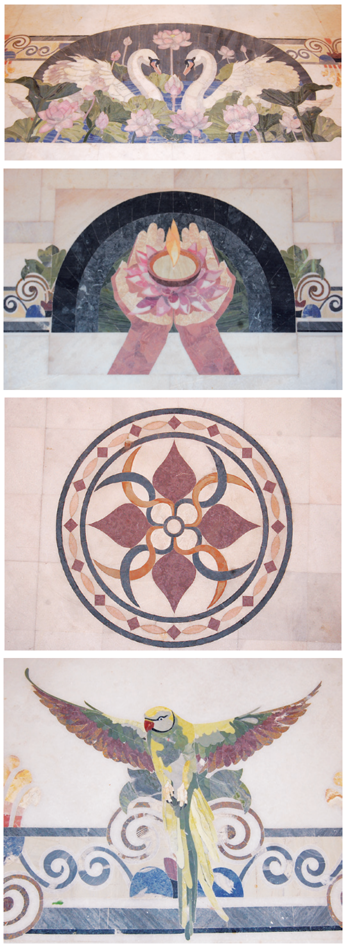


benefit. The Vedic scriptures tell us that whoever witnesses a deity installation is most blessed, and this was surely a moment of mercy.

The last item on Tuesday evening was *śayana adhivāsa,* when the deities lie down in beautiful beds to rest for the night. This is a one-time occurrence, because after the full-size deities are installed on their altars, only the smaller deities are bathed and put into beds daily.

Behind where the deities had been standing throughout the evening, a large bedroom had been set up. When all the other rites for the evening were over, all the stage items had been removed, and most of the crowd had dispersed, a peaceful atmosphere reigned in the tent. In that quietude the *śayana adhivāsa* was performed. In the

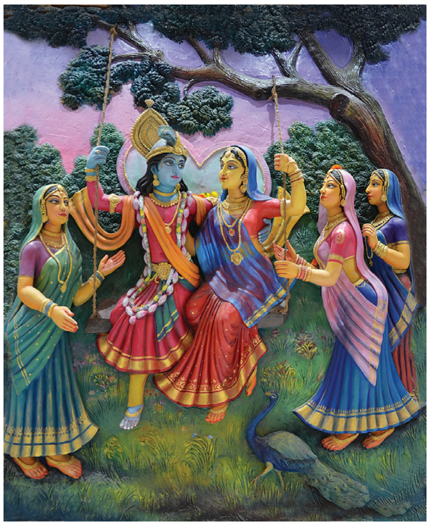


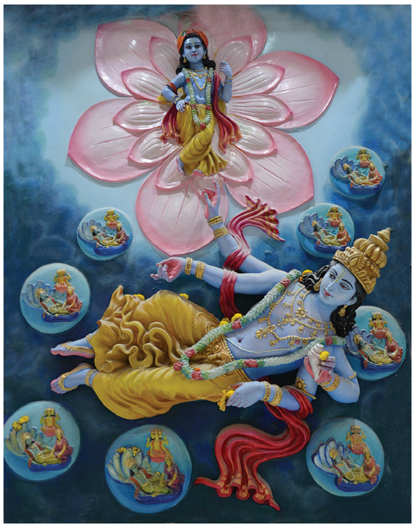


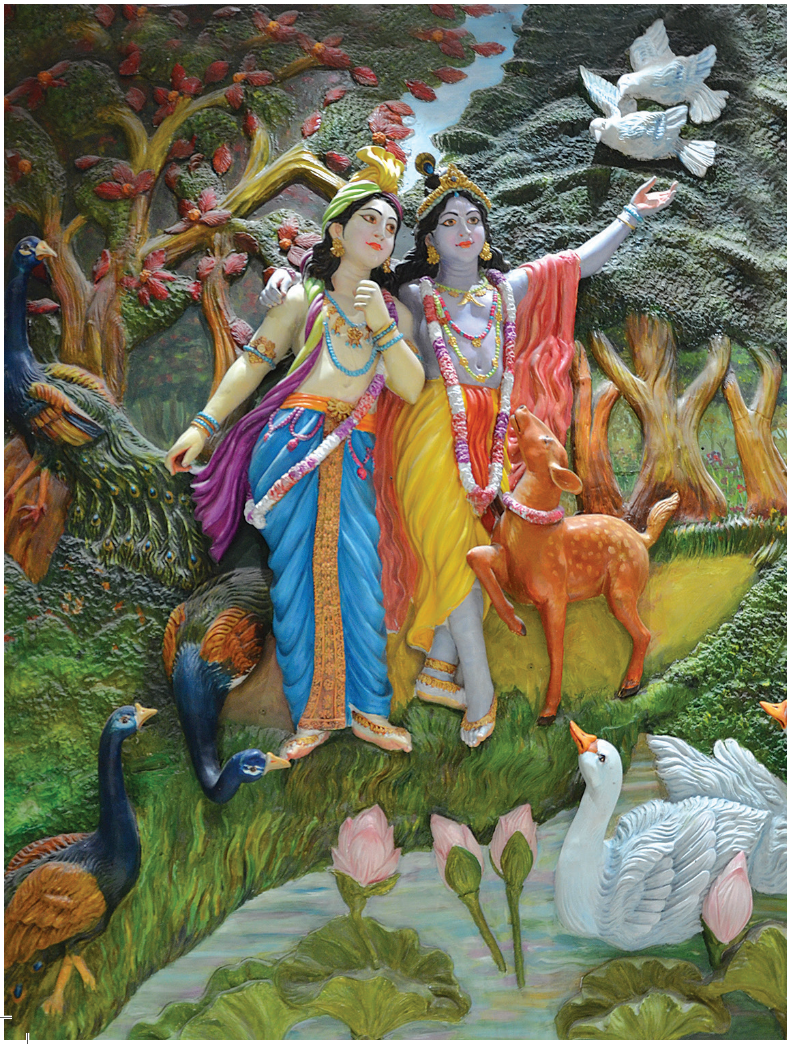
Outside the temple (above), an artist decorates with dyed flour. At right, found throughout the temple are the beautiful creations of skillful artisans.

Stopover for Pilgrims

Since Noida is directly on the way from Delhi to Vrindavan, the pilgrimage place where Lord Kṛṣṇa lived, devotees from around the world can visit Noida and stay at the guesthouse en route to Vrindavan. From Noida, drive under the Mahamaya Flyover to the new, uncongested Yamuna Express Highway, free of the constant honking of horns typical of India. In two hours you are in Vrindavan.







A devotee lectures in the temple (right), the walls of which display colorful bas-reliefs depicting the Lord's pastimes (above and left).

bedroom were night lamps, fragrant flowers, mosquito nets, and soft, melodious chanting of mantras in praise of the Lord. The privileged few witnessing the ceremony included some of the ISKCON leaders and members of the congregation. The experience left a deep spiritual impression on our hearts.

On Wednesday, leading devotees continuted the auspicious installation rites with fervor and enthusiasm while others brought forth offerings to please the deities.

An extraordinary shower of the colors of nature's beauty concluded the bathing ceremony, as flower petals of every color of the rainbow showered upon the deities and accentuated their beauty.

During the deities' two-hour procession from the tent to the temple, a helicopter circled repeatedly and poured colorful flowers on the deities and the temple spire. After discharging one load of flowers, the helicopter would land, reload with flowers, and fly again. "Helicopter Showers Flowers on ISKCON Deities" read one newspaper headline.

Official Opening

The temple officially opened to the public on the third day of the festival. Cabinet Minister Ujjwal Raman Singh cut the ceremonial ribbon and offered *pūjā* to the deities. Twenty-five thousand Noida residents streamed in.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's followers have placed a new religious landmark in Uttar Pradesh. The temple is a magnificent monument to celebrate the glorious beauty of Their Lordships, and it will attract devotees for hundreds of years to come. ✿

Lokanāth Swami, a member of ISKCON's Governing Body Commission as a GBC minister, serves as the zonal secretary for Noida. He oversaw the temple construction and presided over the installation ceremonies and the opening festivities.

Sehnsucht

When Vocabulary Encourages Yearning for Kṛṣṇa

The more spiritually evolved we become, the more we long for life's "missing piece."

by Satyarāja Dāsa

WOOOAHHH! That's it!" I said when I came across the German word *sehnsucht* (*ZEN-zookt*). "That sums it all up!"

Sehnsucht means "longing," "yearning," or even "craving," but it also carries implications of "intensely missing," as when pining for something as if one's life depended on it. The word hearkens to the need a person feels when addicted to hard drugs, an addiction so intense one's entire being calls out for it.

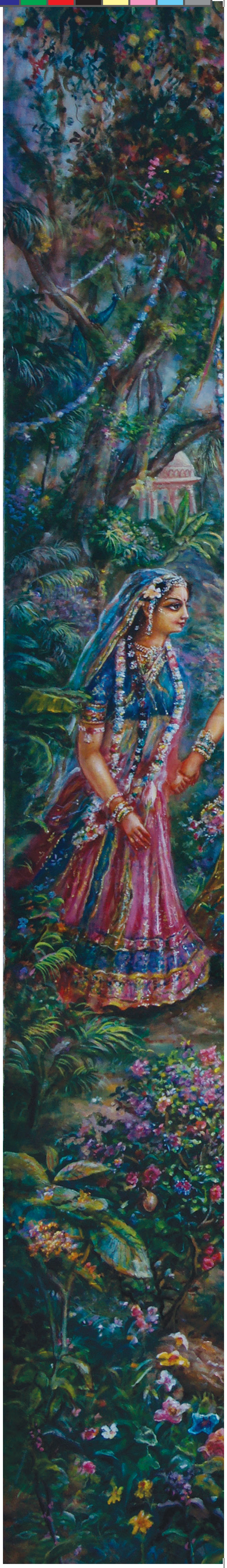
The word also indicates the feeling that one's life is unfinished or imperfect, that a piece of the puzzle is missing, and that one cannot go on without finding that missing piece.

According to Wikipedia,

> It is sometimes felt as a longing for a far-off country, but not a particular earthly land which we can identify. Furthermore there is something in the experience which suggests this far-off country is very familiar and indicative of what we might otherwise call "home." In this sense it is a type of nostalgia, in the original sense of that word. At other times it may seem as a longing for a someone or even a something. But the majority of people who experience it are not conscious of what or who the longed for object may be, and the longing is of such profundity and intensity that the subject may immediately be only aware of the emotion itself and not cognizant that there is a something longed *for*.

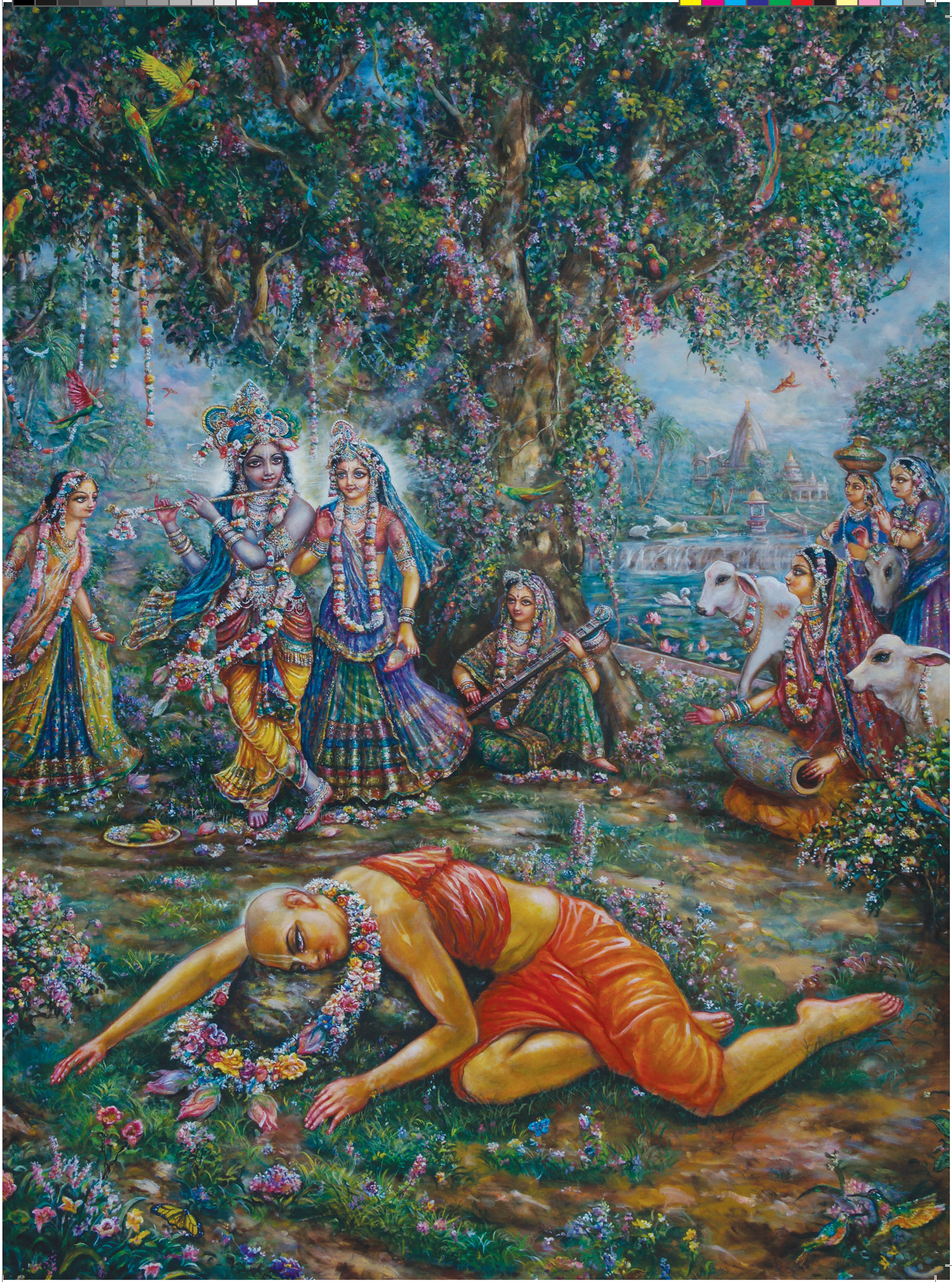
Christian author C. S. Lewis wrote that *sehnsucht* is an "insatiable longing" and saw it in terms of the quest for the Divine. One dictionary defines it like this: "The inconsolable longing in the human heart for we know not what; a yearning for a far, familiar, non-earthly land one can identify as one's home."

The word *sehnsucht,* then, deeply resonates with the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, wherein we learn that in material life something is definitely missing but still people tend to push on, day after day, trying to make sense of it all. Those who are sensitive and spiritually mature intuit that something is wrong and that there is more to life than meets the eye. The more spiritually evolved we become, the more we long for that missing piece. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we know the missing piece to be Kṛṣṇa, or God; we



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself in the mood of His own devotee, revealed the most intense feelings of separation from Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Painting by Puṣkara Dāsa



also know the spiritual world to be the place we originally came from, the “non-earthly land one can identify as one’s home.”

And even when one is in a spiritually perfected state, say our Kṛṣṇa conscious sages, intense yearning still exists, perhaps more so, but at this point it is on a more advanced platform: it is a specific longing for Kṛṣṇa in the mood of those who serve Him eternally in the spiritual world.

Thus, in the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, intense spiritual desire exists in a sort of hierarchy, on two distinct levels, which for the purposes of this article I will call “Sehnsucht 1” and “Sehnsucht 2.”

When separated from Kṛṣṇa, as we are in the material world, we feel that separation deep down in the core of our being.

Sehnsucht 1

George Harrison opens his foreword to *Kṛṣṇa,* Śrīla Prabhupāda’s summary of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*’s Tenth Canto, with the following words: “Everybody is looking for KRISHNA. Some don’t realize that they are, but they are.” From a Vaiṣṇava point of view, this is the underlying premise of *sehnsucht*. The simple fact is this: everyone is part of Kṛṣṇa, and when separated from Him, as we are in the material world, we feel that separation, perhaps not overtly but certainly deep down in the core of our being. We may not know exactly what it is, but we have a sense that our vision is covered, that something is obstructing our view of higher reality. Prabhupāda elaborates: “As living spiritual souls we are all originally Kṛṣṇa conscious entities, but due to our association with matter from time immemorial, our consciousness is now polluted by the material atmosphere.” This means that Kṛṣṇa consciousness, even in the early stages, is a glimpse of something long forgotten.

In this life we are easily covered by the illusory energy, known as *māyā*. In that state we forget our real self-interest, which is service to Kṛṣṇa, and we suffer in the material world. As eternal souls we sense that our “birthright” is an ongoing life of bliss and knowledge, but our natural desire for self-preservation leads us to seek shelter in temporary, material solutions, which only bring us further misery.

The strength of the material energy is such that the only way to get beyond it is by spiritual practice, which includes praying, daily chanting of God’s names, worship services – all of which are meant to invoke remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, or God.

The idea is to absorb one’s senses in the Supreme – to see His form, to taste food and to smell incense offered to Him, to read about His pastimes, and mainly to hear the chanting of His names. These create a “wrap-around awareness” that engulfs practitioners in the spiritual world. And by being so engulfed, you remember who you really are.

Prabhupāda often compared this to being cured of amnesia. In the conventional treatment of the disease, the patient is given a daily regimen of gradual exposure to his or her former life. Through sustained effort, it is hoped, the patient gradually remembers and becomes cured. This is called anamnesis – the reversal of amnesia. Similarly, through a daily regimen known as *sādhana*, spiritual practices connected to Kṛṣṇa, we become relieved of spiritual forgetfulness and gradually remember our real life in the spiritual world with Kṛṣṇa.

But even prior to this, having attained a preliminary state of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one feels satisfied to have found the path of *bhakti* (devotion to Kṛṣṇa) and reaches the culmination of “Sehnsucht 1.”

Sehnsucht 2

After substantial spiritual progress on the path, one’s longing persists, but in a different form. As Caitanya Mahāprabhu prays:

nayanaṁ galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanaṁ gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitaṁ vapuḥ kadā
tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviśyati

“O my Lord, when will my eyes be decorated with tears of love flowing constantly when I chant Your holy name? When will my voice choke up, and when will the hairs of my body stand on end at the recitation of Your name?”

Showing by His own example how an advanced devotee prays, Caitanya Mahāprabhu is here yearning for certain divine symptoms known as *sāttvika-bhāvas*, or the ecstatic bodily transformations that occur when one develops love of God. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* tells us that tears, pride, joy, fainting, madness, trembling, patience, humility, melancholy, perspiration, faltering of the voice, and standing of bodily hairs on end are natural symptoms of ecstatic love. They cause a devotee to dance spontaneously and “to float in the ocean of transcendental bliss.”

Thus, a fundamental yearning accompanies the process of enhanced Kṛṣṇa consciousness: one develops a taste for moving forward on the path and doesn’t let anything get in the way. This might be considered “Part A” of “Sehnsucht 2.”

“Part B” emerges with *lobha*, or spiritual greed. This is the dawning of the highest level of *sehnsucht,* wherein one deeply craves love of

God. After this, through strict practice and the mercy of pure devotees, one gradually becomes engrossed in such love, developing spiritual passion, known as *rāga*. As this occurs, one remembers one's eternal relationship with the Lord in the spiritual world, increasing one's longing to an incalculable degree. This, in turn, leads to the attainment of the highest level, called *prema-bhakti*, which is pure love of God, the ultimate goal of life.

The Perfection of Sehnsucht

In the higher levels of *sehnsucht,* one knows exactly what one is longing for. Caitanya Mahāprabhu calls out in desperation,

> *yugāyitaṁ nimeṣeṇa*
> *cakṣuṣā prāvriṣāyitam*
> *śūnyāyitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ*
> *govinda-viraheṇa me*

"O Govinda [Kṛṣṇa]! Feeling Your separation, I am considering a moment to be like twelve years or more. Tears are flowing from my eyes like torrents of rain, and I am feeling all vacant in the world in Your absence."

Here, in the seventh verse of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *Śikṣāṣṭakam* prayers, we are allowed to witness the internal struggle of a soul nearing the highest levels of perfection. As Śrī Caitanya, in the previous verses of this prayer, has played the part of souls aspiring for perfection, here He shows a soul tasting the first stages of genuine Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or love of God. In this verse He elaborates on the theme of *viraha-bhakti*, or "devotion in separation." This is the highest form of *sehnsucht*, and it deepens with the deepening of one's love for Kṛṣṇa.

One who has reached some genuine modicum of accomplishment on the path of pure love of God feels both *sambhoga*, or "devotion in union," and *vipralambha* (also known as *viraha-bhakti*), or "devotion in separation." Separation is considered higher than union because it enhances the experience of union. Separation is thus the key ingredient for the intensity of one's devotion.

For example, once when Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were performing Their divine pastimes together, a large black bee flew into Their vicinity. Now, Kṛṣṇa is sometimes known as Madhusūdana because He killed the demon known as Madhu. But a bumblebee is also Madhusūdana because *madhu* also means "honey."

When Kṛṣṇa saw the bee, He jokingly said, "Rādhā, watch out! That bee might sting You!"

Rādhārāṇī became frightened and ran into Kṛṣṇa's arms. When She did this, Kṛṣṇa lovingly joked with Her again.

"O Rādhā," He said, "there is no longer any reason to fear. Madhusūdana is already gone."

Of course, Kṛṣṇa was referring to the fact that the bee had left, but the mere thought that Kṛṣṇa might be gone gripped Rādhā in *vipralambha-bhāva*, the loving mood of separation, even though She was right there in Kṛṣṇa's arms.

In this example of the intensity of love in separation, Rādhā appreciated Kṛṣṇa even more when She began to consider His absence. In this way, spiritual separation drives the devotee mad with love, and so Caitanya Mahāprabhu asks for relief: "O Govinda, please relieve my senses!"

And in Kṛṣṇa consciousness the senses are ultimately relieved, at least to a point, because the ultimate form of *sehnsucht* is resolved when one develops pure love for God. That is to say, for the devotee the missing piece of life, found in Sehnsucht 1, has long been achieved, and the desire to unite with Kṛṣṇa in loving relationship, as in Sehnsucht 2, also knows fruition, even if only when one advances on the path of *bhakti.* But the higher echelon of Sehnsucht 2 is a paradox of sweetness, known only by the most advanced devotees. In this exalted state, one inconceivably feels longing and satisfaction at the same time, the feeling culminating in a state of divine madness that brings the highest ecstasy as well as a form of sanity unknown in the material world.

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor and founding editor of the Journal of Vaishnava Studies. *He has written more than thirty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness and lives near New York City.*

TEMPLE OF THE
VEDIC PLANETARIUM
Mayapur, West Bengal, India
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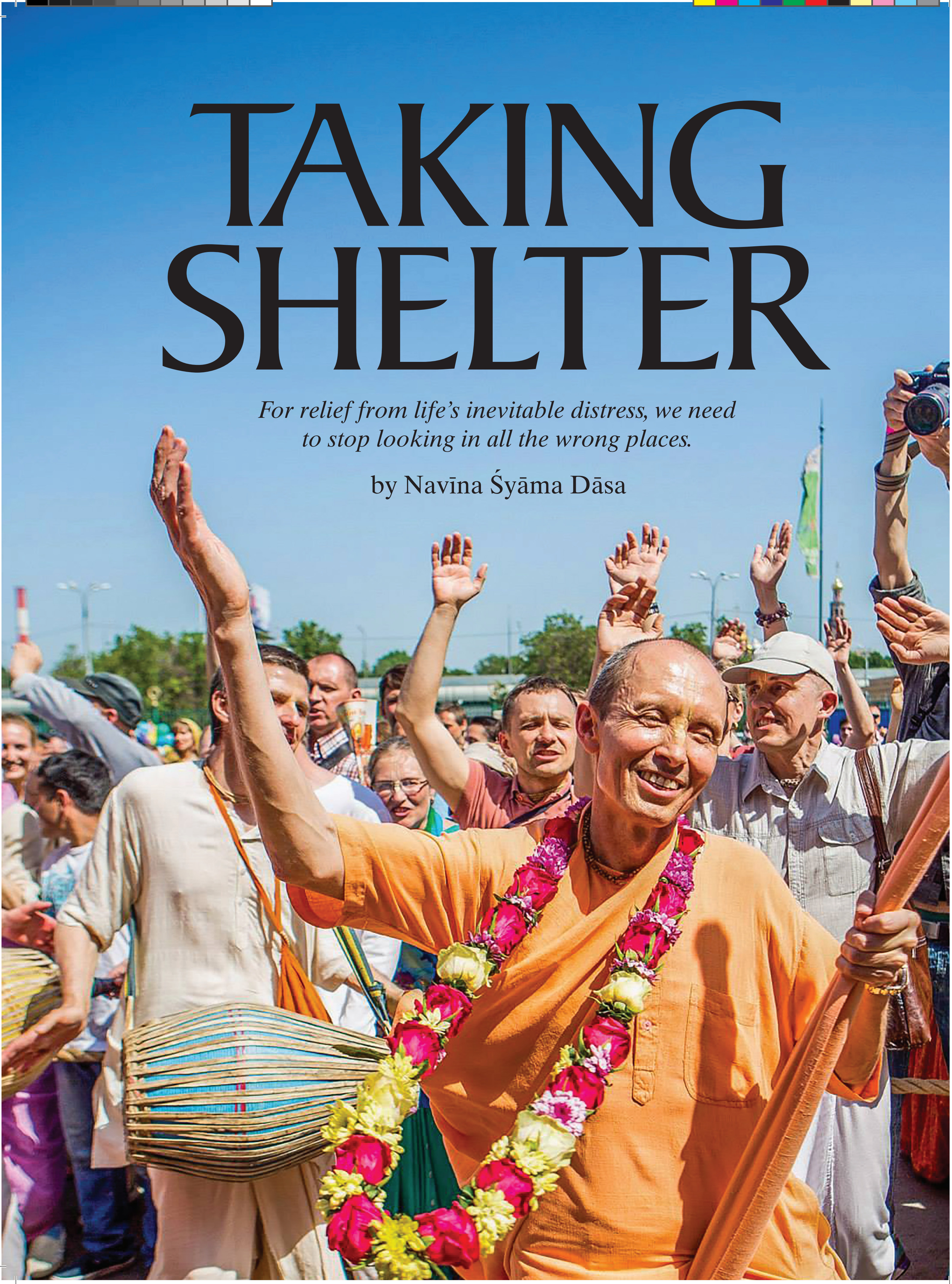

TAKING SHELTER

For relief from life's inevitable distress, we need to stop looking in all the wrong places.

by Navīna Śyāma Dāsa

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IN ISKCON WE often speak of “taking shelter” of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His devotees. For example, a new member who has expressed his or her interest in a particular initiating spiritual master is said to have “taken shelter” of that guru. And every morning at centers around the world, members glorify the sacred *tulasī* plant, proclaiming that all who take shelter of her will have their desires fulfilled. A similar proclivity is found among other Vaiṣṇava groups. As their *mahā-mantra,* members of the Vallabha *sampradāya* chant *śrī kṛṣṇa śaraṇaṁ mama,* claiming the Lord as their only shelter. But what does it really mean to take shelter? And if we’re supposed to turn only to Kṛṣṇa or His devotees for shelter, to whom (or what) should we not turn?

Perhaps the most precise English equivalent of the Sanskrit term *śaraṇam* is “refuge.” Merriam-Webster defines refuge as “protection from danger or distress” or “something to which one has recourse in difficulty.” Etymologically, the word indicates an escape. All of this accurately conveys the sense of the word *shelter* in the devotional context. Taking shelter is about what you do when you are upset, or tired, or depressed. For children, the answer is usually straightforward. Whenever my three-year-old daughter trips and falls, or has had a sleepless night, my wife and I know what to expect: “Mama, baba, can you pick me up?” For adults, unfortunately, running to our mommies or daddies is generally not an option. Yet we experience as much distress as children, and – given our amazing ability to induce unwarranted mental anguish – likely more. To whom, then, should we run? The Vaiṣṇava scriptures provide an emphatic and singular answer: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and our original and eternal father. Indeed, Kṛṣṇa’s ultimate instruction in the *Bhagavad-gītā* is *mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja* – “Come to Me as your only shelter.” For followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the prescription is even more specific: seek refuge in the Lord’s holy name. Thus, we know the only real cure for our material blues is to immerse ourselves in the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.* Still, most of us reflexively fall back on other sources of solace. Specifically, we use food, sleep, intoxicants, sex, and various self-protective measures to negate what is disturbing us and provide some pleasure in its place. Śrīla Prabhupāda characterized these activities – eating, sleeping, mating, and defending – as animalistic: in some ways unavoidable for humans as living organisms, but secondary to the finer features that distinguish us from the beasts. As it turns out, we can understand the specific vows that he asked ISKCON members to take at initiation, as well as his general instructions to minimize our basic bodily activities, as a way of redirecting our reliance on these temporary means of escape to reliance on the infallible feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa as our only true salvation.

Physical Protection

Let’s start with the most primal urge, fear. Prompted by fear, we defend ourselves, using clothing and dwellings to protect us from the elements, and weapons and walls to protect us from other beings. These measures constitute shelter in its most literal form. They are necessary, no doubt, but they can involve great expense and endeavor. That is why Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged his followers with families to live in farm communities, where they could shelter their bodies in simple homes made from indigenous materials and use the rest of their time in seeking shelter for their souls. As he states in his commentary to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.2.4):

> The necessities of life for the protection and comfort of the body must not be unnecessarily increased. . . . [T]he reserve energy of human life, which is far superior to that of animals, should simply be utilized for self-realization. . . . Great sages and saints in the days of yore were not living in palatial buildings furnished with good furniture and so-called amenities of life. They used to live in huts and groves and sit on the flat ground, and yet they have left immense treasures of high knowledge with all perfection.

The *Bhāgavatam* also relates the history of young Prahlāda, whose only protection – from the tridents of fiends, the stomping feet of elephants, the bite of fearful snakes, body-crushing boulders, and exposure to extreme heat, cold, and wind – was his unflinching faith in and meditation on Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Psychological Escape

But shelter is about more than physical protection; those harried by life's struggles often also long for psychological escape. For this, many people turn to sleep and intoxication. After a rough day, who doesn't like to indulge in an extra hour of shut-eye the next morning? Why should we get up and face the cruel world again, when we can peacefully lie on our beds in a soft and hazy dreamland? To be sure, it is natural to wake up from a good night's sleep – or a well-timed nap – feeling refreshed and in better spirits. But to wallow in the semiconscious stupor of the morning hours and postpone waking up, not because one is getting necessary rest but merely to avoid encountering reality, leads only to lethargy and dullness. As Śrīla Prabhupāda instructed, "The more one sleeps, that means he's under the control of *māyā.*" (Conversation, Jagannatha Puri, January 26, 1977) This is why he insisted that his followers rise at the *brāhma-muhūrta* hour, well before dawn, and seek comfort instead in the early-morning chanting of the holy names. "If you want to follow Caitanya Mahāprabhu, there is no question of sleeping in the morning." (Conversation, Aligarh, India, October 9, 1976)

Even worse than the grogginess of superfluous sleep is the oblivion of drug and alcohol abuse. These are even more effective at neutralizing pain, but this ameliorative effect is short-lived. As Śrīla Prabhupāda explained:

> This taking shelter of intoxication is no use to get oneself free from anxieties. It is a drug. It is oblivion. For some time we forget everything, but again when you come to your consciousness the same anxieties and same things are there. So this will not help you. (Lecture, New York, January 1, 1967)

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Moreover, intoxicants retard our spiritual advancement by dragging our consciousness downward:

> In the mode of ignorance, people become mad. Being distressed by their circumstances, they take shelter of intoxication, and thus they sink further into ignorance. Their future in life is very dark. (*Gītā* 14.17, Purport)

Of course, drug and alcohol addiction can also have catastrophic side-effects on one's health and relationships. Again, Śrīla Prabhupāda's alternative recommendation was to become "intoxicated by Caitanya Mahāprabhu's gift, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.*" (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi* 9.48, Purport) He explained that immersion in ecstatic chanting is the best refuge because "*kīrtana-rasa* is the safest situation within this material world." (*Songs of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas,* Foreword)

Pleasurable Distractions

True shelter must not only block out what assails us, but must also give us a little diversion in its stead.

This is where food and sex come in. In the United States, it is commonplace to speak of "comfort food." Additionally, eating disorders often involve a progression from negative emotions to overindulgence. Thus, whether by choice or compulsion, many people turn to familiar foods – often ones high in fat and calories – when life gets stressful. They do this, not because they are hungry, but because eating soothes them and provides some pleasure amid the pain. Whereas eating nearly always has some therapeutic effect (just ask my wife about the difference in my mood before and after I've had lunch), this effect is meant to be incidental; when we eat primarily to induce some emotional change rather than to obtain nourishment, we can wreak havoc on our bodies. Fortunately for the members of ISKCON (and as anyone who has attended a Sunday Feast program well knows), Śrīla Prabhupāda taught the transformation, rather than the restriction, of eating. Food that has been offered to the deity and thus become spiritualized is as good as God:

> We can associate with Kṛṣṇa in so many ways by chanting His holy name, by hearing His qualities and pastimes, by seeing His beautiful form in *arcā* deity, by eating His *prasāda*. . . . All these different items are identified with Kṛṣṇa because He is the Absolute Truth. (Letter, August 18, 1970)

By eating only Kṛṣṇa's *prasāda,* therefore, we end up taking shelter, not of food, but rather of the Lord Himself. Far from fostering gluttony, the great *ācārya* Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that this kind of eating will actually help us control our tongues. Moreover, whereas ordinary food can never really comfort us, Lord Kṛṣṇa guarantees that His *prasāda* will dissipate all of our miseries. (*Gītā* 2.65)

Sex is an even more potent palliative than food. In the right circumstances, it is an important part of family relationships; in the wrong ones, it can become an unwholesome addiction – seemingly satisfying at first, but ultimately leaving one emotionally hollow, if not physically diseased. Hence, Śrīla Prabhupāda warned against using intimate relations with the opposite sex as a source of comfort. *(Bhāg.* 4.27.4, Purport) Instead, he urged us to seek relief by redirecting our attention onto the romantic dalliances of Lord Kṛṣṇa:

> Kṛṣṇa exhibited this *rāsa-līlā* dance . . . just to captivate the conditioned soul. Since they are very much attracted by sexology, they can enjoy the same life with Kṛṣṇa and thus become liberated from the material condition. . . . [T]he pastimes and activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa are medicine for the conditioned souls. If they simply hear about Kṛṣṇa they become relieved from the material disease. They are addicted to material enjoyment and are accustomed to reading sex literature, but by hearing these transcendental pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs,* they will be relieved from material contamination. (*Kṛṣṇa,* Chapter 33)

There is no question of artificially renouncing eating, sleeping, mating, or defending. (Lord Kṛṣṇa actually warns against repression. *Gītā* 3.33) Nor should we view these bodily activities as inherently incompatible with being a hundred percent dedicated to serving God. (Kṛṣṇa explains that a yogi need only regulate them, not reject them entirely. *Gītā* 6.17) For most of us, they are a natural and unavoidable part of our day-to-day lives. As practicing devotees, however, we should move beyond depending on food, sleep, intoxicants, sex, and self-protective measures for emotional and physical shelter; instead, we should learn to turn invariably to Lord Kṛṣṇa – especially His name, but also His deity, His pastimes, and even His food remnants – for escape and comfort when we are distressed. In fact, we must ultimately relinquish our reliance on every kind of material relief or distraction. For only when we have abandoned all material shelters and find our only recourse in transcendence will we be eligible to go back home, back to Godhead.

Navīna Śyāma Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Bhakti Cāru Swami. His family lives in ISKCON's Radha Kalachandji community in Dallas, where he is an attorney with the United States Department of Labor and where his daughter attends TKG Academy.

Yamarāja Dāsa

With evident devotion, devotees gaze upon Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma during Their installation in Alachua, Florida, in 2010. At left: a recent photo of the deities taken on the day of the Festival of Colors (Holi).

Time for The Journey Back Home

Learning our true identity should inspire us to fully use our life to secure the best destination after our time in this body runs out.

by Purushottam Kumar

IT CANNOT BE seen or touched or felt, but its existence is undeniable. Just like a tsunami wave, it has no emotions, but it entraps and swallows all. The high and the mighty, the poor and the meek, men and women, every being of this world has to bow to it and surrender to its dictum. Time – the mightiest of all – is unstoppable and unconquerable.

The might of time has always been unchallenged and will remain so forever. Time annihilates everything and underlines the reality that in this world nothing is timeless but everything is temporary. That is why scholars, philosophers,

Hourglass: ©iStock.com / bill oxford. Inset of aging body: ©iStock.com / KeithBishop. Collage: Yamarāja Dāsa.

and sages for eons have been urging people to purge their insatiable worldly desires and focus on things that are permanent and indestructible. Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, who ruled about five thousand years ago, said that the most astonishing thing in this world is that people see that others are dying every moment but they never believe that one day they too will die.

Corporal Obsession

Suppose you are presented with a luxury car, say a Rolls Royce, with a warning that it contains a bomb that will definitely explode at some unrevealed time. Who would be drawn by the charm of owning such a luxurious suicide car? The unequivocal response would be, “No sane person would even look at it.” But all of us own such a vehicle and are obsessed by it. We call it our body, and we go overboard to display our fondness for it.

As we now know that the soul is timeless and is never annihilated, we should channel all our energy to protect our eternal soul.

Empirical evidence and intellectual introspection confirm that one day our body will decay and disappear, but still we aren’t able to look beyond it. Without qualms, everyone agrees that life is as temporary as a bubble in the ocean. But we shrug off any such discussion or contemplation, pretending that our bubble will never burst.

We whip our imagination and make elaborate plans for our future. We spend time amassing wealth, enticing the opposite sex, and struggling hard to carve a niche for ourselves in society. We try hard to enjoy as hard as possible. As one corporate slogan puts it, “Work hard and party hard.” But just as a whiff of delicate wind destroys a house of cards, powerful time shatters all our dreams and desires. *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.18) confirms the futility of the material body: “The material body of the indestructible, immeasurable, and eternal living entity is sure to come to an end.”

Most of us do not muster the courage to think beyond this life, because we have no knowledge beyond it. However, a plethora of information is available in the Vedic literature that describes a life without miseries, fear, anxieties, and, most important, death. Vedic books are the words of God, so they are timeless, and the facts they state are eternal truths. This priceless literature does not just poignantly talk about the ephemeral body, but it reveals the secret that we do not become extinct with the extinction of the body. It further explicates that we are not this body but we are souls.

The Ageless Soul

Just as a car starts functioning and moving when the driver sits inside and operates it, our body becomes active once the soul enters it. When the driver leaves, the car stops. Similarly, when the soul leaves the body, the body stops functioning and drops dead. Kṛṣṇa defines a wise person as one who laments neither for the living nor for the dead (*Gītā* 2.11).

Kṛṣṇa describes the attributes of the soul.

> For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. . . . He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain. . . . (*Gītā* 2.20)
>
> The soul can never be cut to pieces by any weapon, nor burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind. (2.23)
>
> As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones. (2.22)

The above revelation should be a wakeup call for all of us. As we now know that the soul is timeless and is never annihilated, we should channel all our energy to protect our eternal soul. Vedic books inform us that we originally resided happily in the spiritual world, but like spoiled brats we refused to appreciate the love and warmth of God and our fellow spiritual citizens, and so we were sent to this reformatory house, the material world. We are here because of our past misdeeds, but we have an opportunity to correct ourselves and reclaim the citizenship of the spiritual world. Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, isn’t like an insensitive jailer of this material world; He is our father and is ever ready to awaken our dormant love for Him. He eagerly wants us to reform and return to Him.

The Soul’s Journey

As uncontaminated rainwater gets sullied upon touching the ground, the intrinsically pure soul gets covered with impurities upon entering the material world. The soul’s subtle covering of mind, intelligence, and false ego decides the soul’s destiny. The first body the soul gets after leaving the spiritual world is that of a human being. In the human form of life the soul has the privilege to rectify mistakes and become utterly pure. If that happens, then the subtle coverings of the soul get removed and the soul travels back to the spiritual world. If the soul misuses the human form of life and instead of endeavoring for salvation resorts to sensual pleasure, then the soul gets entangled in this world and stays here until regaining its original purity.

The soul occupies new bodies based on activities done and desires nurtured in the present life. Human beings who give in to animalistic propensities, like eating the flesh of animals, indulging in illicit sex, or remaining unclothed, acquire the body of a beast, an insect, a reptile, a bird, or a plant in the next life. But persons who perform good deeds, give charity, live a regulated life, are nonviolent, honest, and kindhearted, get promoted to heavenly planets, where there is tremendous scope for corporal pleasure. But even in the higher planets one is despondent, because the fright of old age, disease, death, and rebirth in lower species exists there too.

Returning to The Spiritual World

As long as the soul flits around the material world, it remains diseased. The only cure is to flush out the accumulated impurities of the heart, which have made us spiritually blind, and thus qualify to return to God's kingdom. Being benevolent, God takes trouble to redeem the lost souls. To persuade us to return to His kingdom, He comes to this world in His original form as Lord Kṛṣṇa or Lord Caitanya and as incarnations such as Lord Rāma, or He sends His messengers like Nārada Muni, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Lord Kṛṣṇa and His representatives also leave behind spiritual literature like *Bhagavad-gītā, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* and *Īśopaniṣad,* which categorically explain the importance of leading a God-centered life. To understand the sublime message that echoes throughout these revealed books, we need to hear from self-realized spiritual teachers.

The current age is Kali-yuga. The scriptures predicted that during this era irreligious activities would become prominent and ungodly people would occupy center stage. People living in this period are fickle, unlucky, unintelligent, and lazy in spiritual matters. But the era has one great boon: for spiritual advancement, people need only follow a very simple process, revealed by Lord Caitanya about five hundred years ago. He said that in this age the most potent way to re-spiritualize our lives is to chant the names of God, especially the *mahā-mantra:* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Chanting cleanses the heart of all the dust accumulated for millions of lifetimes. It also jogs our memory, thus helping us revive our original spiritual relationship with Kṛṣṇa. It's a simple yet powerful process, and anyone can do it.

To ensure our spiritual growth,

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Toronto's Festival of India in Photos

MADHAVA SMULLEN. PHOTOS BY BRIAN BATISTA BETTENCOURT | This year, celebrating its 40th anniversary, Festival of India hosted a series of public events, with more unique features than ever. ISKCON News takes a look at some of those highlights in photos.

D.C. Gardener Encourages City Temples to Go Green

MADHAVA SMULLEN | As environmentally-friendly living becomes more and more of a concern in a modern society where Earth's resources are fast running out, ISKCON has an increasing responsibility to set a good example.

ISKCON Invited for EU Commission President Meeting

KUMARI KUNTI SHERREITT | This year the Hindu Forum of Europe's (HFE) President Bharti Tailor with General Secretary Mahaprabhu Das (also the Director of ISKCON Communications Europe) represented the Hindu faith for this important meeting.

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we must accept favorable activities and reject unfavorable ones.

- Chant the names of Kṛṣṇa diligently and hear them attentively.
- Associate with likeminded, serious devotees.
- Regularly read books that will take us closer to Kṛṣṇa.
- Offer food first to Kṛṣṇa and then take it as His mercy.
- Give up all forms of illicit sex, including pornography and movies that provoke sexual fantasies. Controlling sex desire is of the utmost importance for spiritual growth. Once the taste for devotional life sprouts, sex desire automatically vanishes. The tenth-century Vaiṣṇava saint Yāmunācārya wrote, "Since I have been engaged in the transcedental loving service of Kṛṣṇa, realizing ever-new pleasure in Him, whenever I think of sex pleasure, I spit at the thought, and my lips curl with distaste."
- We should refrain from committing and encouraging violence. So we should not eat flesh, whether of beasts, birds, or fishes.
- We should also not indulge in gambling or any form of intoxication.

Following the above process will surely guarantee a bright future and help us transcend the material world, where there is danger at every step. If a train we're in catches fire, sooner or later the fire will consume us, regardless of which class we are seated in. Similarly whether we are rich or poor, successful or unsuccessful, death will devour us one day. So we should immediately take up the process of devotion to God before it becomes too late. No doubt mighty time in the form of death will apprehend us one day, and we should be ready. By holding Kṛṣṇa's hand, we can cross over to our eternal home, where everyone is eagerly waiting to embrace us. ❀

Purushottam Kumar is a member of the congregation of ISKCON Kolkata. He works in Tech Mahindra as an associate solution designer.

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Kanpur, UP — Mainawati Marg, Bithur Rd., Nawabganj, 208 002/ Tel. 9037188117, 9198707801, or 9198707804/ iskcon.kanpur@pamho.net
Katra, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Sri Kalika Mata Mandir, Katra Vaishnodevi, 182 101/ Tel. (1991) 233047
Kolkata, WB — 3C Albert Rd., 700 017 (behind Minto Park, opp. Birla High School)/ Tel. (33) 3028-9258 or -9280/ iskcon.calcutta@pamho.net
◆ **Kurukshetra, Haryana —** ISKCON, Main Bazaar, 136 118/ Tel. (1744) 234806 or 235529
Lucknow, UP — 1 Ashok Nagar, Guru Govind Singh Marg, 226 018/ Tel. (522) 2636500, 9415235050 or 9415008065/ lucknow@pamho.net
Ludhiana, Punjab — Sterling Tower, Vrindavan Rd., Civil Lines, 141 001/ Tel. 9316970600 or (161) 2770600 / iskcon.ludhiana@pamho.net
Madurai, TN — 37 Maninagaram Main Rd., 625 001/ Tel. (452) 274-6472
Mangalore, Karnataka — ISKCON Sri Jagannath Mandir, near Hotel Woodlands, Bunts Hotel Rd., 575 003/ Tel. (824) 2423326 or 2442756, or 9844325616
◆ **Mayapur, WB —** ISKCON, Shree Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir, Shree Mayapur Dham, Dist. Nadia, 741 313/ Tel. (3472) 245620, 245240, or 245355/ mayapur.chandrodaya@pamho.net
Moirang, Manipur — Nongban Enkhol, Tidim Rd./ Tel. (3879) 795133
◆ **Mumbai, Maharashtra —** Hare Krishna Land, Juhu 400 049/ Tel. (22) 26206860/ info@iskconmumbai.com; guest.house.bombay@pamho.net
◆ **Mumbai, Maharashtra —** 7 K. M. Munshi Marg, Chowpatty 400 007/ Tel. (22) 23665500/ info@radhagopinath.com
Mumbai, Maharashtra — Shristhi Complex, Mira Rd. (E), opposite Royal College, Dist. Thane, 401 107/ Tel. (22) 2811-7795 or -7796/ jagjivan.gkg@pamho.net
Mysore, Karnataka — #31, 18th Cross, Jayanagar, 570 014/ Tel. (821) 2500582 or 6567333/ mysore.iskcon@gmail.com
Nagpur, Maharashtra — Empress City Mall, Opp. Raman Science Centre, Gandhi Sagar Lake, 440017/ Tel. 9049828549, 9823014688, or 9766447719/ iskcon.nagpur@pamho.net
Nellore, AP — ISKCON City, Hare Krishna Rd., 524 004/ Tel. (861) 2314577 or 9215536589/ sukadevaswami@gmail.com
◆ **New Delhi —** Hare Krishna Hill, Sant Nagar Main Rd., East of Kailash, 110 065/ Tel. (011) 2623-5133, 4, 5, 6, or 7/ delhi@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: guest.house.new.delhi@pamho.net)
New Delhi — 41/77, Punjabi Bagh (West), 110 026/ Tel. (11) 25222851 or 25227478
Noida, UP — A-5, Sector-33, 201 301 (Opposite NTPC office)/ Tel. (120) 2506211
Pandharpur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Dhama, East Bank of Chandrabhaga River, Pandharpur, Dist. Solapur, 413 304/ Tel. (2186) 267242 or 267266, or 9423335991/ iskcon.pandharpur@pamho.net
Patna, Bihar — Sri Sri Banke Bihariji Mandir, Golok Dham, Budha Marg, Patna-1/ Tel. (612) 2220794, 2687637, or 2685081; or 9431021881/ krishna.kripa.jps@pamho.net
Pune, Maharashtra — 4 Tarapoor Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. (20) 41033222 or 41033223/ nvcc@iskconpune.in
Puri, Odisha — Bhakti Kuti, Swargadwar, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 231440
Raipur, Chhatisgarh — Hare Krishna Land, Alopi Nagar, Opposite Maharshi Vidyalaya, Tatibandh, Raipur 492 001/ Tel. (771) 5037555 or 9893276985/ iskconraipur@yahoo.com
Rajkot, Gujarat — Sri Sri Radha Neelmadhav Dham, Kalawad Rd., Opposite Kankot Patiya, Mota Mava, 360 005/ Tel. 9898550185/ vaishnavseva@yahoo.co.in
Ranaghat, WB — Gourdham, Habibpur, Ranaghat, Dist. Nadia, 741 403/ Tel. (3473) 281150 or 281226/ shyamrup.jps@pamho.net
Salem, TN — ISKCON, Hare Krishna Land, Karuppur 636 012/ Tel. (427) 2001686/ iskcon.salem@pamho.net
Secunderabad, AP — 27 St. John's Rd., 500 026/ Tel. (40) 780-5232
Silchar, Assam — Ambikapatti, Silchar, Dist. Cachar, 788 004/ Tel. (3842) 34615
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Solapur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Land, 171/2 Uttar Kasabe, Akkalkot Rd., Bhaktivedanta Marg, near New Jakat Naka, Dist. Solapur, 413006/ Tel. 9371178393 or 9370651251/ shursendas@yahoo.co.in
Sri Rangam, TN — 103 Amma Mandapam Rd., Sri Rangam, Trichy 620 006/ Tel. (431) 2433945/ iskcon_srirangam@yahoo.com.in
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala — Hospital Rd., Thycaud, 695 014/ Tel. (471) 2328197/ jsdasa@yahoo.co.in
Tirunelveli, TN — 10B Tiruvananthapuram, Near Vannarapettai Circle, 627 002/ Tel. (462) 2501640
◆ **Tirupati, AP —** K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (877) 2231760 or 2230009/ revati.raman.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.tirupati@pamho.net)
Udhampur, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Srila Prabhupada Nagar, 182 101/ Tel. (1992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
Ujjain, MP — 35–37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Ananda, 388 120/ Tel. (2692) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 246422 or 222617
Vellore, TN — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Road, Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandaal, Vijayawada, Dist. Guntur, 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
Visakhapatnam, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar-45 (City office and mail: Plot No. 52, Pandurangapuram, Beach Rd., Visakhapatnam 530 043)/ Tel. (891)2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net)
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Dist. Mathura, 281 124/ Tel. & Fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: Tel. (565) 2540022; ramamani@sancharnet.in)
Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 426182
Yamunanagar, Haryana — ISKCON Hare Krishna Dham, Hare Krishna Marg, Raghunathpuri, Yamunanagar 135001/ Tel. (1732) 321001 or (mobile) 09355330775/ vishu_bakshi05@yahoo.co.in

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Ahmedabad District, Gujarat (Hare Krishna Farm) — Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
Assam — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj

Many temples have their own websites, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com. Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). For information on international calling, go to www.howtocallabroad.com. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (218) 623473
Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., Dist. R.R., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263/ naimisaranya@pamho.net
Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Odisha — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (2622) 63546
Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24866922 or 24866009
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura 395005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net

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Brampton, Ontario — 6 George Street South, 2nd Floor, L6Y 1P3/ Tel. (416) 648-3312/ iskconbrampton@gmail.com
Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario** — 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
◆ **Toronto, Ontario** — 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ info@torontokrishna.com
◆ **Vancouver, B.C.** — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe: (604) 433-7100 or (888) 433-8722/ akrura@krishna.com

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Ashcroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P. O. Box 99, V0K 1A0)/ Tel. (250) 457-7438/ iskconsaranagati@hotmail.com

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Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ rajan416@yahoo.com
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ info@iskconboston.org
Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ chicagoiskcon@yahoo.com
Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ premvilasdas.rns@gmail.com
◆ **Dallas, Texas** — 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetariantaste@aol.com
◆ **Denver, Colorado** — 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052
Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari108@gmail.com
◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii** — 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-4913/ hawaii.iskcon@gmail.com
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Kansas City, Missouri — 5201 Paseo Blvd., 64110/ Tel. (816) 924-5619/ rvc@rvc.edu
Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ info@lagunatemple.com
Las Vegas, Nevada — Govinda's Center of Vedic India, 7181 Dean Martin Dr., 89118/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
◆ **Los Angeles, California** — 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ membership@harekrishnala.com
◆ **Miami, Florida** — 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave., #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 461-1348/ devotionalservice@iskcon-miami.org
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◆ **New York, New York** — 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ ramabhadra@aol.com
◆ **New York, New York** — The Bhakti Center, 25 First Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 253-6182
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Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ premadhatridd@live.com
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Salt Lake City, Utah — 965 E. 3370 South, 84106/ Tel. (801) 487-4005/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
San Antonio, Texas — 6772 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 401-6576/ aadasa@gmail.com
◆ **San Diego, California** — 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500 or 272-8263/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — Mountain View, California, 1965 Latham St., 94040/ Tel. (650) 336-7993/ isvtemple108@gmail.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish, 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah** — Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ tallahassee.iskcon@gmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd., 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ madhupati.jas@pamho.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona** — 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ sandaminidd@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ info@iskconofdc.org

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Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonatha@gmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Ln., 37359/ Tel. (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd., 17082/ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ dhruva.bts@pamho.net
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888/ madanmohanmohini@yahoo.com

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com

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◆ **Cardiff, Wales** — Cafe Atma / The Soul Centre, 40 Crwys Road, Cathays, CF24 4NN/ +44 (29) 20 390 391, cafe.atma@gmail.com
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland** — 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
Leicester, England — 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (1555) 894790/ karunabhavan@aol.com
◆ **London, England (city)** — Radha-Krishna Temple, 10 Soho Street, W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (20) 7437 3662; shop, 7440 5221; Govinda's Restaurant, 7440 5229/ info@iskcon-london.org
◆ **London, England (country)** — Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Ln., Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ info@krishnatemple.com; (for accommodations:) bmguesthouse@krishna.com
London, England (south) — 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 7988857530/ krishnaprema89@hotmail.com
London, England (Kings Cross) — 102 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (20) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (161) 226 4416/ contact@iskconmanchester.com
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (191) 272 1911
◆ **Swansea, Wales** — Govinda's, 8 Craddock Street, SA1 3EN/ +44 (1792) 468 469/ info@iskconwales.org.uk; restaurant, info@govindas.org.uk

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Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (8) 8359-5120/ iskconsa@tpg.com.au
Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (7) 3379-5455
Canberra — 44 Limestone Ave., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (2) 6262-6208
Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (3) 9699-5122/ melbourne@pamho.net
Perth — 155–159 Canning Rd., Kalamunda (mail: P.O. Box 201 Kalamunda 6076)/ Tel. +61 (8) 6293-1519/ perth@pamho.net
Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9959-4558/ admin@iskcon.com.au

Centers Around the World

Sydney — Govinda's Yoga and Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ sita@govindas.com.au

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Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (3) 5288-7383

Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane, off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock (mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325)/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ iskconfarm@mac.com

Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ ajita@in.com.au

RESTAURANTS

Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st Floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (7) 3210-0255

Brisbane — Krishna's Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., West End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net

Burleigh Heads — Govinda's, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au

Maroochydore — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Ave., QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (7) 5451-0299

Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939

Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578

Perth—Govinda's Restaurant, 194 William St., Northbridge, W. A. 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1684/ perth@pamho.net

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Christchurch, NZ — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (3) 366-5174/ iskconchch@clear.net.nz

Hamilton, NZ — 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (7) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz

Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912

Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 6664112/ regprakash@excite.com

Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ vdas@frca.org.fj

Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243

Sigatoka, Fiji — Sri Sri Radha Damodar Temple, Off Mission St., Sigatoka Town/ Tel. +679 9373703 or 6520866/ drgsmarna@connect.com.fj

Suva, Fiji — 166 Brewster Street (mail: P.O. Box 4229, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 3318441/ iskconsuva@connect.com.fj

Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (4) 478-4108/ info@iskconwellington.org.nz

Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian Street (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/ Tel. +64 (4) 801-5500/ yoga@gaurayoga.co.nz

RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (9) 412-8075

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Wellington, NZ — Higher Taste Hare Krishna Restaurant, Old Bank Arcade, Ground Floor, Corner Customhouse, Quay & Hunter St., Wellington/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233

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Amsterdam — Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX/ Tel. +31 (20) 675-1404/ contact@amsterdhama.nl

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Magical Distractions

ADEPT YOGIS CAN ATTAIN *siddhis,* mystic powers, or what Śrīla Prabhupāda sometimes referred to as magic. These powers can distract the advancing yogi, forcing him to lose sight of the goal of God realization.

Devotees on the path of *bhakti-yoga* consider mystic *siddhis* insignificant rewards. They're material, not spiritual. As Śrīla Prabhupāda points out in *The Nectar of Devotion,* science often imitates the achievements of advanced yogis. For example, a yogi with the *aṇimā-siddhi* can enter a stone, but an engineer can drill through a mountain.

The science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke wrote, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."

Technology allows us to do things once considered impossible. A few centuries ago, who could have imagined nearly instantaneous communication with anyone anywhere in the world? Now, as technology progresses without stopping or even letting up, we move along with it, mostly oblivious of how much it is changing our world and our lives.

For one thing, each of us seems to have more power today than any of the thousands of generations before us. Consider the yogi again. Another *siddhi,* called *prāpti-siddhi,* allows a yogi to get anything from anywhere. Śrīla Prabhupāda told of a yogi who on demand delivered in an instant the fresh branch of a pomegranate tree, with attached fruit, from Afghanistan to Calcutta. FedEx is somewhat slower, but through the Internet anyone with enough money can quickly get practically anything from anywhere in the world.

But increased power without increased knowledge is dangerous. The newly rich camel driver who drives his new car like his old camel – by stomping his foot – is in for trouble.

In the midst of the rapid change around us, we need to stay philosophically grounded. We can ask, "Has anything really changed?" The philosophical view, as presented, for example, by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* is that despite our progress in manipulating the material energy, the essential realities remain. The Internet and the smart phone haven't solved our greatest problem: we're all going to die. While our eyes are glued to our digital screens, time is stealing our limited stock of days.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "The material world is an illusory energy to deviate the living entities from the path of self-realization."

Distraction from the real business of life has always been a problem; even the ancient Vedic sages speak of it. But these days we have more distractions than ever before. We can lose ourselves so deeply in the digital world that the solid world of bricks and bread and brothers and mothers disappears.

Whether the distraction is the lure of the unlimited options of the Internet or the quarreling of neighbors in the village, the effect is the same: wasting time for no substantial benefit.

By substantial I mean eternal. Reality is what endures beyond the ravages of time. If we pause to think about it, we can know intuitively what the Vedic literature teaches: we are the conscious self within, interfacing with the external world through bodies made of senses. We can also see that even though the bodies we had in infancy, childhood, and so on, are gone, we continue to exist. Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa's teaching that we'll live on after death makes perfect sense. Instead of being fooled by magic tricks, whether by yogis or technologists, we should turn our attention to the eternal reality, described in detail in the venerable Vedic literature, the most relevant of which are available to us through Śrīla Prabhupāda's inspired presentations.

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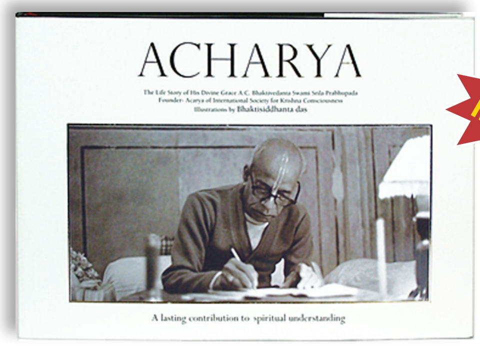
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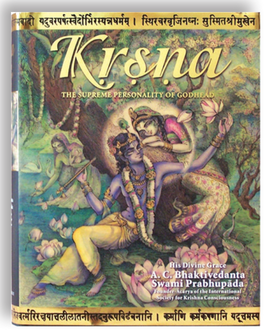
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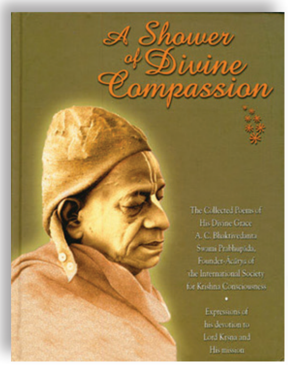
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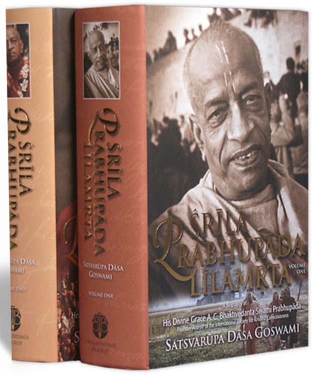
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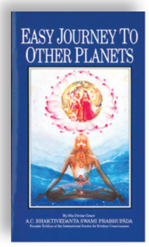
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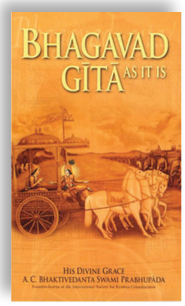
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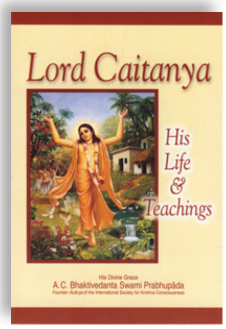
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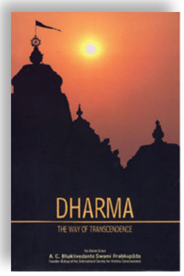
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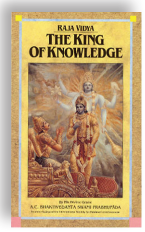
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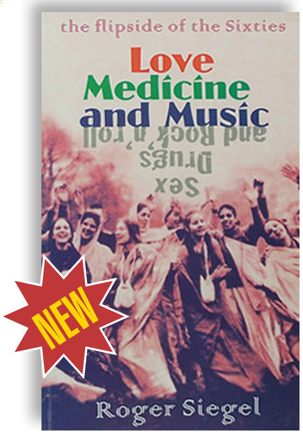
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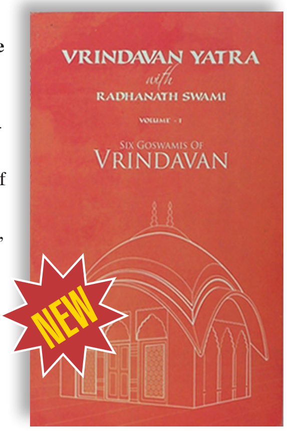
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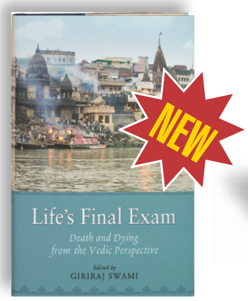
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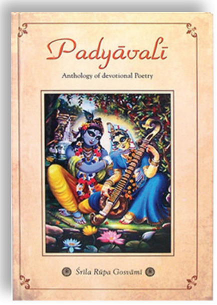
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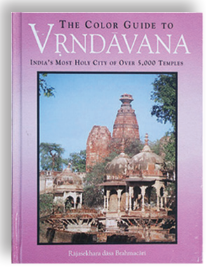
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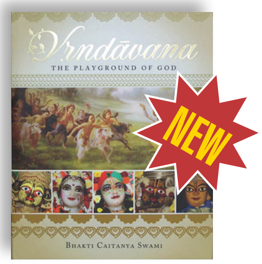
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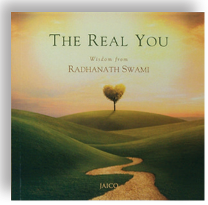
Vṛndāvana: The Playground of God – By Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Attractive photography and fascinating descriptions of Vrindavan and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes there make this book the quintessential guide to this holiest of towns. This beautiful travel book includes two PAL-format DVDs (will work on DVD players outside the US and Canada and on most computer DVD drives). Visit the main temples and pastime places in the town of Vrindavan. Hardbound, 245 pages, dust-jacket, high-quality glossy photos, map of the Vrindavan area, 9½" x 11½". Each DVD is approximately 109 minutes. **$119.95** RLHB929

FROM THE DISCOURSES OF RĀDHĀNĀTH SWAMI

NEW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Wisdom from
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JAICO

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Radhanath Swami

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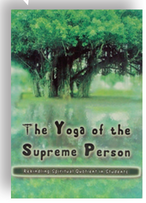
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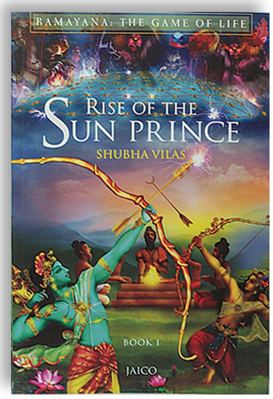
The Yoga of the Supreme Person: Rekindling Spiritual Quotient in Students – A collection of short stories, perfect for both children and adults, that teach moral and spiritual lessons. Softbound, 96 pages, 4" x 5¾". **$2.95** VESB421

Rāmāyaṇa



Ramayana, the Game of Life: Rise of the Sun Prince – By Shubha Vilas. This new series of books, following the original *Rāmāyaṇa*, decodes the eternal wisdom of that poetic scripture through gripping narrative and thought-provoking instruction. The narrative closely follows Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, gently weaving in folk takes as well as beautiful analogies from the Tamil *Kamba Rāmāyaṇa*. The first of a six-volume series, *Rise of the Sun Prince* takes you through the divine story of Lord Rāma from His birth up to His marriage. Softbound, 252 pages, 5½" x 8½". $11.95 VESB418

Prince Rama, Son of the Solar Dynasty, Part 1 / A Prince in Exile: The Journey Begins – By Vrinda Sheth; illustrated by Anna Johansson. This first book of an illustrated trilogy is a feast for the eyes, ears, and heart. Through an engaging narration and beautiful illustrations, Vrinda Sheth and Anna Johansson bring to life the exciting story of Rāma's childhood and His marriage to Sītā. Recommended reading for ages 10 and up. Hardbound, 203 pages, 8½" x 11½". $29.95 T3BH732

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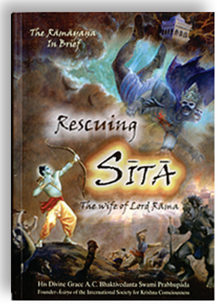
SON OF THE SOLAR DYNASTY
PART 1
A PRINCE IN EXILE
THE JOURNEY BEGINS



The Rāmāyaṇa in Brief: Rescuing Sītā—By His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. This pocket-size book presents chapters 10 and 11 of the Ninth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, along with beautiful illustrations commissioned for The Glory of India Museum in New Delhi. Softbound, 152 pages, 5" x 7". $3.95 S2BS388

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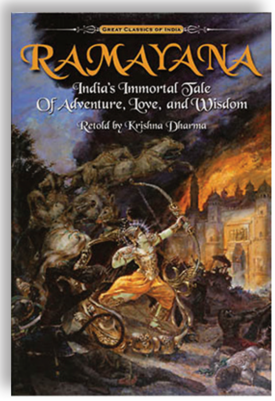

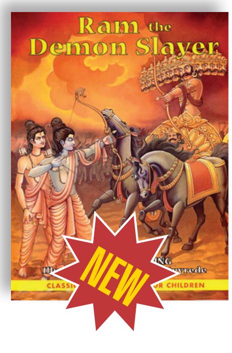

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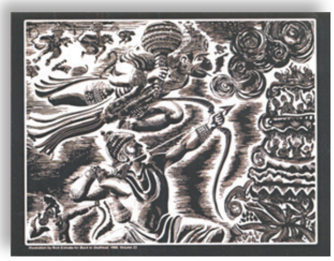
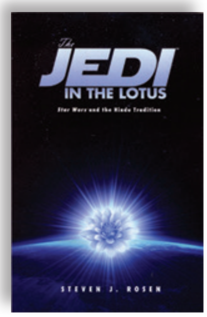
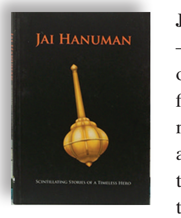



The JEDI IN THE LOTUS
Star Wars and the Hindu Tradition
STEVEN J. ROSEN

The Jedi in the Lotus: Star Wars and the Hindu Tradition – By Steven Rosen (Satyarāja Dāsa). This first-ever examination of the Star Wars universe from a Hindu perspective, illuminates many aspects of the background and meaning of the widely acclaimed films. Softbound, 188 pages, 5½" x 8½". $18.95 LSBS209



Jai Hanuman – The history of Hanuman is filled with happiness, excitement, and great adventure. The stories told here explore the many qualities of Hanuman in an entertaining way, perfect for both kids and adults. Softbound, 151 pages, 4½" x 6½". $6.95 VESB424.

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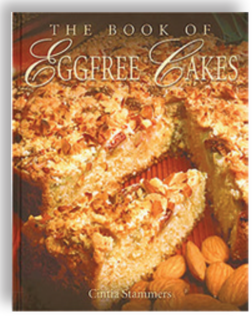

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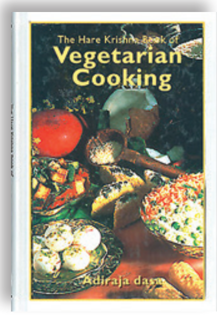
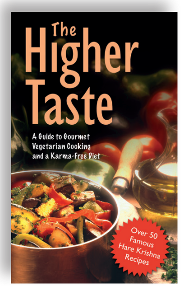


The Hare Krishna Book of Vegetarian Cooking – By Adiraja Dasa. An introduction to Indian vegetarian cooking. Over 100 recipes and detailed instructions on preparing all the essential, unique ingredients that make up Indian vegetarian cuisine. Hardbound, 318 pages, 39 color photos, 6" x 9". $14.95 BLBH237



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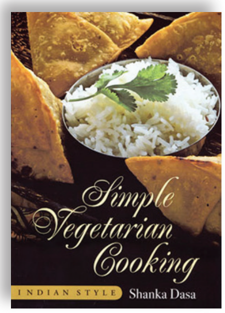
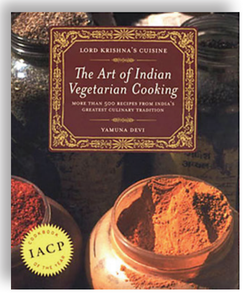


Simple Vegetarian Cooking, Indian Style – By Shanka Dasa. A variety of tasty Indian meals especially meant for vegetarians who recognize that the food they eat is a gift from God (Kṛṣṇa) and naturally feel inclined to show their appreciation and gratitude. Softbound, 160 pages, 6" x 9". $8.95 VMBS607



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VEDIC THOUGHTS

Real happiness must be appreciated by one's transcendental senses. Unless one is purified, the transcendental senses are not manifest; therefore to purify the senses one must take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and engage the senses in the service of the Lord. Then there will be real happiness and liberation.

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.28.20, Purport

Absolute knowledge is in the mode of goodness, knowledge based on duality is in the mode of passion, and foolish, materialistic knowledge is in the mode of ignorance. Knowledge based upon Me, however, is understood to be transcendental.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.25.24

The sound incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul [i.e., *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*], enters into the heart of a self-realized devotee, sits on the lotus flower of his loving relationship, and thus cleanses the dust of material association, such as lust, anger, and hankering. Thus it acts like autumnal rains upon pools of muddy water.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.8.5

My dear king, when Kṛṣṇa's devotees dance in *kīrtana,* they destroy the inauspiciousness of the earth by the touch of their feet, of the directions by their glance, and of the higher planetary systems by their upraised arms.

Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya 20.68

You should know, O best of *brāhmaṇas,* that in each cycle of four ages the branches of the *Vedas* are thus organized by a different Vyāsa. But Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa, know it well, is the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself. Who else on earth, O Maitreya, could be the author of the *Mahābhārata*?

Parāśara Muni
Skanda Purāṇa 3.4.4–5

O Viṣṇu, Your name is completely transcendental. Thus it is self-manifest. Indeed, even without properly understanding the glories of chanting Your holy name, if we vibrate Your name with at least a small understanding of its glories – that is, if we simply repeat the syllables of Your holy name – gradually we shall understand it.

Ṛg Veda 1.156.3

Compared to a person who is attached to chanting *japa,* the person who performs loud chanting of the holy name of Śrī Hari is one hundred times better. This is because the person who chants *japa* purifies himself, whereas the person who chants the holy name loudly in *kīrtana* purifies himself, all those who are with him, and everyone else who hears the holy vibration.

Śrī Nāradīya
Quoted in *Caitanya-bhāgavata,*
Ādi-khaṇḍa 16.283

2014

HARE KṚṢṆA FESTIVAL OF INDIA

Schedule for North America

Remaining Schedule:

September 4–5 or 6–7:
Phoenix, Arizona, Festival
September 15–25:
Washington, D. C., area, Festival
& University Programs
September 27:
Philadelphia Rathayātrā
October 4:
Washington, D. C. (Potomac),
Śrī Rāmacandra Vijayotsava

NOTE: Some of these dates are yet to be confirmed. Before scheduling your travel, be sure to confirm the festival date with the ISKCON temple in the city where the festival is to be held. Or email Festival of India: madhuhadasa@gmail.com.

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